STUDENTS AT THE THRESHOLD:

A COURSE TO PREPARE COLLEGE SENIORS TO INTEGRATE THEIR

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THEIR FIRST WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

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Finally, I am indebted to my parents, Tom and Carol, for the unconditional love they have showed to me for as long as I can remember, and for being prayer warriors on my behalf.

ABSTRACT

When faced with the demands of their first post-collegiate workplace, many Christian graduates are overwhelmed and uncertain how to draw upon the claims and resources of their Christian faith. This project provides a model of how a campus minister can help graduating seniors prepare for better work-faith integration. It attempts to correlate the key findings from a scriptural theology of work with the experience of recent alumni in addition to the wisdom of experienced scholars and practitioners in this field of work-faith integration.

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING: "LOST IN TRANSITION"

This study addresses the question: How can a campus minister[1] prepare

collegians to connect their Christian faith with their soon-to-be first workplace? The goal

is for graduating students to understand how the Christian faith both informs and

provides resources for their initial workplace experience.

Campus Ministers as Equippers

Collegiate ministers are convinced of the formative, strategic nature of college;

they know that ideas and patterns embraced by students can change the trajectory of their

lives. The collegiate years are crucial in the formation of personal identity, behavioral

patterns and social relationships. Therefore, campus ministers strive to help students

meet Jesus Christ and follow Him more completely. They plan trips, lead studies and

sponsor activities to that end. Yet they know from the outset of their relationship with

any student that within a few years they will say goodbye and launch that student into the

world of non-student-oriented work. And this future work[2] will shape where and how

these graduates spend the bulk of their energy and time. Does what we're doing as

campus ministers really matter once collegians graduate and head for work? It makes

sense to send them off with biblical convictions and practical suggestions about work that

will match the demands they will soon face in their workplaces.

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[1] I believe that campus/collegiate ministers fall under the Biblical category of "pastor-teacher," (Eph. 4:11) with responsibilities to "shepherd" (1 Pet. 5:2) the collegians under their care (and, to an extent, the larger campus community) and connect them with local churches.

[2] For the purposes of this paper, the term "work" will signify a college graduate's initial paid employment, unless specified otherwise.

Why Is It So Hard and/or Not Happening?

Many recent Christian graduates feel as if their faith has nothing to do with their work; others affirm a link between faith and work, but their understanding of that link is vague. The "Sunday-Monday gap" occurs when an individual doesn't realize or forgets or intentionally detaches his work-life from his relationship with God. It seems that more writings today are addressing this issue, but they are primarily targeted at veteran workers in mid-career, not "newtimers" to the world of work.[3]

One reason that campus ministers have overlooked or inadequately addressed the "Sunday-Monday gap" is because many such ministers have not studied or developed a theology of work as part of their overall systematic theology.[4] As Miroslav Volf observes, "Amazingly little theological reflection has taken place in the past about an activity which takes up so much of our time."[5] In addition, many campus ministers may lack personal experience in non-religious workplaces. Each year that passes also makes them further removed in age from their students. Plus, the escalating pace of change in today's world means that their students are entering a far different world than the one the campus minister entered at graduation. To make the challenge greater, there is no

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[3] David Miller's Ph.D. dissertation demonstrates that the "faith at work" movement is more than a fad; it's a bona fide social movement. See David W. Miller, *The Faith at Work Movement: Its Growth, Dynamics, and Future* (Princeton, NJ: Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2003). It has since been published as David W. Miller, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Whether it's called "the faith at work movement" or "ministry in the marketplace" or "business as mission" or "ministry in daily life," there seems to be a noticeable paradigm shift regarding the intersection of faith and work in many Christian writings today. In recent years the number of books published and organizations created regarding faith and work has proliferated. Miller sees the 3rd and current phase of the Faith at Work movement to have begun in the mid-1980s and continuing to the present. He mentions Phase 1 as the Social Gospel Era (c.1890s-1945) and Phase 2 as the Ministry of the Laity era (c.1946-1985).

[4] Laura Nash and Scotty McLennan, *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday: The Challenge of Fusing Christian Values with Business Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 294-295.

[5] Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 69.

universal post-graduation experience—tensions vary for different occupational choices. Nevertheless, these obstacles can and should be overcome; this project is my attempt to do so.

Campus ministers must embrace occupational work within the scope of their religious concern. Without requiring campus ministers (and pastors) to become experts in every profession, we must find ways to learn more about the dilemmas and choices that our students/members face. It's not easy to pastor and I've found solace in Karl Barth's observation, "Perplexity comes to us simply and solely because we are ministers."[6]

I am looking holistically at students as I strive to prepare them for life after college. The gospel of Jesus Christ is to be applied to every area of human behavior, including thinking and feeling and working and resting and relating. It applies to daily life as well as career ideals. Peter Wagner, noted church growth expert and former professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, indicates that work-faith integration "is what the Spirit is saying to the churches today."[7] One of the Faith at Work pioneers, as well as one of its most prolific authors, Os Hillman, states, "Workplace ministry is an intentional focus of equipping men and women, in all spheres of work and society to understand and experience their work as a holy calling from God."[8]

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[6] Karl Barth quoted in Elton Trueblood, *The Incendiary Fellowship* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 34.

[7] Peter Wagner in Os Hillman, *Faith @ Work: What Every Pastor and Church Leader Should Know* (Cumming, GA: Aslan Group Publishing, 2004), 11, also in his Foreword. In 1952, Elton Trueblood suggested that "opening the ministry to the ordinary Christian in much the same manner that our ancestors opened Bible reading to the ordinary Christian is in one sense, the inauguration of a new Reformation while in another it means the logical completion of the earlier Reformation in which the implications of the position taken were neither fully understood nor loyally followed." See Elton Trueblood, *Your Other Vocation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1952), 32. The Reformers of the 16th century had insisted that *all* legitimate forms of work were a partnership with God and His purposes.

[8] Hillman, *Faith @ Work*, 17.

I cannot trace or predict the sociological ramifications of this growing emphasis on work-faith integration, but it seems reasonably certain that college graduates will acutely struggle with this issue in all eras—the workplace is their next destination. They will need to experience God at work, where they will spend the majority of their waking hours. They need to live their whole lives in response to God's call and not lack guidance about what that might mean. Elton Trueblood has suggested, "It is a gross error to suppose that the Christian cause goes forward solely or chiefly on weekends."[9] I want to help students understand that their chief ministry is located most often in offices and factories and homes and stores. This thesis project is my attempt to understand and respond to this need and not leave graduating seniors under-prepared. I want them to draw upon the resources of the Christian faith as they begin their first job.

How Can This Problem Be Remedied?

To address this need, I interviewed recent Christian graduates (1-4 years since graduating) from representative workplaces and asked these alumni about their initial workplace adjustments and how their Christian faith relates to their work. My field research with these alumni confirmed my previous hunch that they have significant difficulty connecting their Christian faith with their initial job. From the perspective of these alumni, I learned what they are experiencing and what might have been done during their collegiate ministry that could have helped. I was surprised at the pervasive confusion that characterized these graduates' experience, and also their willingness to talk about it.

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[9] Trueblood, *Your Other Vocation*, 57. Trueblood is also quick to acknowledge the importance of what he designates the "base" (i.e., gathered church) and the "field" (i.e., scattered church)—Wagner prefers the terms "nuclear church" and "extended church" leaders, respectively (*Faith @ Work,* p. viii).

I also interviewed employers about what they are looking for as they hire recent graduates and how they evaluate the effectiveness of initial hires. Moreover, I interviewed scholars and experienced practitioners who have thought deeply about this field of work-faith integration. From all my findings, I designed and tested a 10-session workplace curriculum for seniors at Princeton University. These transitional work issues are more urgent and timely for them. Seniors sense the need to get a job and often begin interviewing for it in October or November of their senior year; as such, they are the group most receptive to workplace teaching that will help them handle this transition more effectively. The specifics of this process, including the curriculum I designed, are described in Chapter 4. This project is undergirded by significant theological study as well as an analysis of a wide range of pertinent literature and other resources.

Chapter 2 addresses the biblical and theological themes most relevant to college seniors in need of a substantive theology of work as they enter their first workplace. My research revealed that graduates will soon be born into another world—the adult work world—and they will be scrambling for a faith to live by as they negotiate the terms of entry. Biblically, work is an important topic, albeit a complex one. This second chapter provides a thorough examination of work from the biblical perspective as a tool to help students (and campus ministers) inculcate a multi-faceted understanding of work that is grounded in scriptural revelation.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the most pertinent literature published on young adult developmental theories and the nature of transformation for collegians. College stands as such a promising yet precarious stage with unique dynamics. This third chapter also examines books written by employers of young workers, human resource specialists

and professors who study this field. In addition, there is an overview of relevant work-faith models. Some of these prevailing models are geared for understanding faith at work amid the pluralism and diversity found in contemporary workplaces, whereas other models are explicitly Christian. Overall, this project attempts to correlate the best findings from workplace theology with those of employment training, keeping in mind the distinctive nature of young adulthood for collegians. The goal is to employ these theories in such a way as to foster practical preparation for life beyond graduation.

Assumptions and Parameters

I assumed these seniors had a working understanding, or at least an appreciation, of basic Christian doctrine. I built off core Christian doctrine as we explored the questions: What does God think of work? What can I learn from recent Christian graduates? How can I begin thinking about the trickiest concerns which face new workers? What difference does it make in my work/workplace to be a follower of Christ? The topics we explored are certainly not *all* the things a new Christian worker will need to know, but it is a start. Ultimately, as a campus minister, I'm striving to help them build their foundation for work, not its entire superstructure, which will take decades to complete.

To What End?

Education is not only supposed to help students think better, but also help them determine what to think about. Work is worth thinking about. The role that faith plays in our daily lives, including work, is an essential part of human identity and motivation. I want to help seniors think theologically through the issues that have a bearing on daily

life; thus, it's imperative that I build into my equipping model a process to prepare them to be persons of Christian influence and transformation in the world, especially their world of work. Being a Christian at work involves much more than simply being nice to others, periodically praying and acquiescing to God's provision of a job. Based on God's revealed Word, and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in community with other believers, college seniors must think through what they will be doing in their work. As a campus minister, I must gear part of my discipleship of them toward their work.

Whether they want to or not, most adults spend most of their conscious lives in the world of work. As the evangelical Carl Henry put it: "Unless the church makes a difference in a Simon Peter's pursuits at the *fish*-level, the Christian 'life' becomes simply another 'extra' among his items of work and play."[10] Or as the Anglo-Catholic writer Dorothy Sayers asks, "How can anyone remain interested in a religion which seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of his life?"[11] Ideally, "the spiritual manifests itself in a life which knows no division into sacred and secular."[12]

> There is truly no division between sacred and secular except what we have created.
> And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into
> the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause
> of Christ. Holy people must stop going into 'church work' as their natural course of
> action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking and
> journalism with the same zeal previously given to evangelism or to pastoral and
> missionary work.[13]

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[10] Carl F.H. Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1964), 34. Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, Lee Hardy, refers to work as part of "the fabric of this world" (See Lee Hardy, *The Fabric of This World: Inquiries into Calling, Career Choice, and the Design of Human Work* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). And Pope John Paul II calls work a "fundamental dimension of human existence." (See Supreme Pontiff John Paul II, *On Human Work: Laborem Exercens* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1997), 11.

[11] Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1995), 77.

[12] Oswald Chambers, author of *My Utmost for His Highest,* quoted in Hillman, *Faith @ Work*, 16.

[13] Dallas Willard from *Spirit of the Disciplines* quoted in Ibid., 11.

Thus, in faith we must act on these biblical truths about work and begin to see them transform our daily experience. When we receive God's gift of salvation and new life in Jesus Christ, we experience His enabling, empowering presence. God acts in us and with us as we rely on Him in our attitudes and actions. The end is for all work to be done heartily as to the Lord (Col. 3:23) through Christ, "[who] is before all things, and in [whom] all things hold together" (Col. 1:17).

Those Who May Benefit From This Project

Aside from the participating students and alumni, this project can also benefit campus ministers and church staffers and pastors and mentors who want to help young adults relate their Christian faith to work.

CHAPTER 2:   GOD'S WORK AND OURS: A THEOLOGY OF WORK

My thesis-project attempts to address an observed need—recent college graduates figuring out how and why the Christian faith relates to their initial paid employment. This chapter presents the biblical and theological themes most pertinent to that task. Beyond historical trends and contemporary attitudes that Christians hold concerning work, an adequate theology of work must be derived from the Word of God. As much as feasible, I will progress sequentially from Genesis to Revelation, with a few topical themes addressed at the end.

If something has to do with life, then it has to do with God, the author of life. Or, as was asserted in one of the first theological books I ever read: "There is no escaping theological questions. We simply do not have the alternative of theology or no theology. Our alternatives are either to have a well thought-out theology, . . . or to have a hodgepodge theology of unexamined concepts, prejudices, and feelings."[14]

In addition to being unavoidable, theology is also inherently practical. Theology is what we do, not merely what we cognitively agree with or have read. Paul Stevens, in his book *The Other Six Days*, argues for an "applied theology"—that is, knowing requires practical implementation: what you live is what you really know.[15] Theology must find expression in someone's life in real time rather than be relegated to the realm of academic speculation. People cannot help but act from their worldview, even at work. Yet I also know that sometimes the conduct of Christians doesn't fully match what they

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[14] William Hordern, *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology*, rev. ed. (New York: Collier Books, 1968), xvii.

[15] R. Paul Stevens, *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 10-16.

believe; that is, believers are trying experientially to live into truths (i.e., put into practice) that they know to be positionally true (see Rom. 6-8). Even things which may be true or self-evident may not become clear until later as one matures. Jesus, the author and perfecter of the Christian faith (Heb. 11:2), was the supreme example of embodying truth (John 1:14; 14:6). Since "the New Testament presupposes a community in which every person is a theologian of application,"[16] my hope is that these biblical themes will inform both my project and the students who participate in it so that our values match God's and we will be doers (i.e., incarnaters) of God's truth regarding work.

God as Worker

God's work is the foundation of our own (see Eph. 2:8-10). God initiates, we respond. God works (Gen. 2:2), man works (Exod. 20:9). Man as worker finds his model in God the mighty worker—"the maker of heaven and earth" (Ps. 121:2).[17] But what does God do? In short, God creates, sustains and redeems. Let's consider these mighty works of God.

The Bible opens with God working. Creation is His originating work, His first recorded act (Gen. 1:1; 2:4). Uniquely, God calls creation into existence (Acts 17:24; Heb. 1:2, 11:3; Rom. 4:17). The whole universe came into being through this act of God (see John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11). Creation is an act of His will. In Genesis 1, God speaks, names, evaluates, sets boundaries and blesses. Moreover, God develops and fashions what he had originally brought into existence.

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[16] Ibid., 21.

[17] All Scripture references are taken from the New International Version of the Bible (NIV).

God created a universe with order and a sense of progression. Creation is neither a necessity nor an accident. Instead, given God's interior life that overflows with regard for others, we might say creation is an act *fitting* for God. It was so much *like* God to create, to imagine possible worlds, and then to actualize one of them. Creation is an act of imaginative love. In fact, as the British author G.K. Chesterton wrote, "the whole difference between construction and creation is . . . that a thing constructed can only be loved after it is constructed; but a thing created is loved before it exists." In creation God graciously made room in the universe for other kinds of beings.[18]

This doctrine of creation means that nothing made is intrinsically evil[19]—everything has come from God. God also made all the interdependent systems which make life possible, as well as other beings. The work of God does not stop with creation. God also sustains the universe He has called into existence (e.g., Acts 14:17); He preserves it and provides for it (Ps. 104:10-30) in an ongoing way. He stands by His work and maintains it; He does not abandon it. And through this continuing work of providence, God guides it to His intended purposes for it in history (e.g., Deut. 11:1-7; John 5:17).

God also redeems, which I will address later under Christ's work. And ultimately God will judge (2 Cor. 5:10) and set things right one day—"make all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

Among its many metaphors, the Bible depicts God as a worker (Gen. 1-2; Job 10:3-12), as builder/architect (Prov. 8:27-31), teacher (Matt. 7:28-29), doctor/healer (Matt. 21:12,17), weaver (Ps. 139:13-16; Job 29:14), gardener/farmer (Gen. 2:8-19, 3:8; Hosea 10:11; John 15:1-8), shepherd (Ps. 23; John 10), potter (Jer. 18:1-10; Rom. 9:19-

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[18] Cornelius Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning and Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 23 (emphasis his).

[19] The emergence of the serpent in Gen. 3 is beyond the scope of this paper.

21); metalworker (Isa. 1:24-26; 31:9), and homemaker (Luke 15:8).[20] God works, God made work and God intends for work to be good.

Work as Co-Creation: Humans as Stewards/Rulers

In Genesis, the working and giving of God provide the premise of all human activity. Man comes to self-knowledge through interaction with God, his maker. Anselm put it this way in his *Proslogion:* "I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this I believe—that unless I believe, I should not understand." We find ourselves by understanding our identity in God—both our unity (as one made in His image, a child) and our disunity (as a creature).

Humans are both exalted and limited beings. God created people in His image (Gen. 1:27-28, 31). These words are said of no other creation. Human life is sacred and "even on the rainiest Monday morning of our lives, we look something like God" (i.e., bear some of his glory); however, "we need to recall that our freedom is relative, our personhood is derivative, that everything important about us is ultimately God's gift."[21] We should not think of ourselves higher than we ought (Rom. 12:3). God is the master who makes our creative working possible in the first place, and He remains actively involved throughout.

Humankind, the crowning piece of creation (see Gen.1:26ff, Ps. 8), is to collectively rule over all living things on earth—plant and animal—in obedience to the Ruler of all things. At creation man is assigned a distinctive task on the planet: Be

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[20] For the Old Testament references, I'm indebted to Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 113. His extensive list of verbs applied to God in Scripture is also helpful (pp. 118-119). Stevens groups the corresponding references under four headings: (1) God as worker, (2) God as lover (i.e., one who relates), (3) God as savior, and (4) God as leader.

[21] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 41.

fruitful. . . multiply. . . subdue (Gen. 1:28). Humanity is part of creation yet God

distinguishes him from the rest of creation and reveals a correspondence between God

and man. "This earthly dominion God allotted neither to the angels nor to the higher

animals, but rather to the human race, whose task becomes, in consequence, the spiritual

control of the earth. Man is to achieve this dominion by inhabiting the earth and by

subjugating nature."[22]

Man has a special relationship to God and responsibility under God. "It is

precisely in his function as ruler that he is God's image. Man is set in the midst of

creation as God's statue. He is evidence that God is the Lord of creation; but as God's

steward he also exerts his rule, fulfilling his task not in arbitrary despotism but as a

responsible agent. His rule and his duty to rule are not autonomous; they are copies."[23]

Man shares the purpose of God to subdue nature.[24] The scope and complexity of

this task is stunning. Ruling includes producing, caring, maintaining, discovering, being

creative, etc. Work needed to be done and God created people to work; it's part of His

model. Referring also to Gen. 2:15, eminent scholar Claus Westermann remarks, "Work

is therefore seen here as part of the essence of man's nature. A life without work would

not be an existence worthy of man."[25] Work relates to what is specifically human; it's an

essential part of our identity as humans. "Even in Paradise, then, in the ideal state of

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[22] Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*, 47. I found the chapter on "The Christian View of Work" (pp.31-71) by this former long-time editor of *Christianity Today* to be helpful.

[23] Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 160-161. Paul Stevens adds that the kingly language used in Gen. 1 and 2 when men and women are called to exercise dominion, denotes "a distinctively royal rule." *(The Other Six Days,* p. 185)

[24] I use the traditional generic term "man," but it's worth stating that it takes male and female humanity to express God's image as they work in His world.

[25] Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Continental Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 220.

innocence, work was the natural activity of human beings."[26] Genesis 1:28 is called the

"cultural mandate" and is

> a commission to establish civilization. It applies to all men, and it embraces every age. There is no human activity that is not covered by it . . . building . . . sewing . . . instructing of children . . . every book, all our technology, research, science and teaching . . . are nothing other than the fulfillment of this command. The whole of history, all human endeavor, comes under this sign, this biblical phrase.[27]

Humans take the materials God has made and shape them into products and institutions.

The charge to work initially applies to physical labor but also includes mental labor by

extension. This cultural mandate remains in effect and is part of our job description. God

made humans to be creative managers with purposeful work.

Let's look closer at the second creation narrative (Gen. 2:4ff). Man, the worker,

is presented with what he has to work on (i.e., the garden/field). The world of man is

God's whole creation—it's all at his disposal to be molded and stewarded responsibly.

Man's existence is possible because God has given him space to live in and provision for

food, and he must work to cultivate the fields. The care and protection and shaping of the

gifts of creation are given to man as his life task. To do this, he is given resources (2:16,

21), boundaries (2:17), a suitable helper (2:18ff.) and powers of decision-making (2:19-

23). As man relates properly to the earth and skies and animals that God created, he

relates to God, as their Creator, who has provided these raw materials and conditions to

him. "Human work. . . is a necessary part of the exchange between God and his people.

Work is a determining factor in a God-created person."[28] This second creation account

begins with the statement that there was no vegetation on earth after God created it, and

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[26] Charles Colson and Nancy Pearsey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1999), 384.

[27] Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 164.

[28] Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 222.

two reasons are given: (1) God had not yet sent rain on the earth, and (2) there was no

man to till it (Gen. 2:5).

> Only when human beings come onto the scene and start working can God's work of
> creation be completed. God creates, God preserves, God's blessing is enacted, God
> transforms the world in anticipation of the world to come . . . and in all that, God
> makes us God's own coworkers. We work with God, and God works through us. We
> make decisions in boardrooms, we flip hamburgers at McDonalds, we clean houses,
> we drive buses . . . and by doing that, we work with God and God works through us.
> No greater dignity could be assigned to our work.[29]

Two verbs stand out in Gen. 2:15. The Hebrew verb, *'abad* (also in 2:5) means to

cultivate (or till) or work something. "The charge to till the fields is therefore identical

here with the command to cultivate in the widest sense: it is a *cultural* charge."[30] This

frequent Old Testament word denoting work (or service) will later be used as the

customary verb for worship.[31] The second verb—the Hebrew *shamar*—means to take

care of or keep or preserve (or guard) the garden.[32] "It is not enough to work the ground

in order that it may produce something. The fields entrusted to man must be carefully

tended and preserved as well."[33] Again, this exercising of dominion over the earth and its

other creatures is an expression of man's bearing the image of his Creator, and sharing, as

God's servant, in God's kingly rule. He is God's representative in the creaturely realm.[34]

Man is to care for creation and use it in the service of God and man, not exploit these

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[29] Miroslav Volf, "God at Work," Yale Center for Faith and Culture,
http://www.yale.edu/faith/esw/centerReadings.htm. (accessed May 31, 2007).

[30] Claus Westermann, "Work, Civilization and Culture in the Bible," in *Work and Religion*, ed. Gregory
Baum (New York: Seabury Press, 1990), 82.

[31] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 111n, 134. Apparently, while we do not find in Scripture a complete
identification of the words for "work" and "worship," a sense of worshipful, sanctuary presence is imported
into the Gen. 2 context. I will consider this further later (see page 44).

[32] W. E. Vine and Merrill F. Unger and William White, Jr., ed., *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical
Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 127.

[33] Westermann, "Work, Civilization and Culture in the Bible," 82.

[34] Kenneth Barker, ed., *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1985), 8.

natural resources. The same word—to keep—is used for our preservation by God in the Aaronic blessing ("The Lord bless you and <u>keep</u> you…" –Num. 6:24).

God has commanded us to have dominion over the world (Gen. 1) and to cultivate and keep the garden (Gen. 2). Naming the animals (2:19) is Adam's first act of dominion over the creatures around him (much like God did in 1:5). Then Adam and Eve make people in their own likeness (Gen. 5:3) as God had made them in His. Notice also that God is enthusiastic for life in all its variety and abundance. "In Genesis God affirms the goodness of work and of marriage—the ordinary means of production and reproduction—with the repeated affirmation that 'He saw that it was good' or even 'very good.'"[35] Similarly, Adam burst forth with celebration at the creation of woman in Gen. 2:23. Work is supposed to be a delightful partnership; and there's almost something playful about the assignment and process of discovery and naming of everything. "God intended that the workplace be beautiful, exciting, satisfying. Work was to be filled with joy. Work was a major reason for our creation. It was intended to be an important act of worship. It was one of the most significant ways in which we could honor our Creator."[36]

"There is something godlike in the projection of a plan, in the articulation of a creative idea, in the giving of oneself to a task."[37] Man's "satisfaction comes, in the god-like manner, from looking upon what he has made and finding it very good."[38]   One can feel this natural sense of satisfaction regarding a paper, presentation, work of art, sale, new design, home repair, mission trip, and vacation plan. As man does what God

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[35] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 38.

[36] Dennis Bakke, *Joy at Work* (Seattle, WA: PVG, 2004), 73-74.

[37] Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*, 51.

[38] Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?*, 53. Chapter 6, "Why Work?" (pp. 47-64), by this Anglo-Catholic writer is beneficial.

commands, man serves God and he will satisfy his own needs and contribute to the well-being of his communities and world.

As the Genesis account continues, man's work branches out rapidly: he breeds sheep and goats (4:2, 20), builds cities (4:17), becomes a musician (i.e., develops the arts, 4:21), makes tools (4:22), develops vine-growing (9:20ff) and makes huge buildings with new building materials (11:3). Progress occurs as the generations grow up out of the Creator's blessing.

Limits of Work: Rhythms of Life and Rest

The revelation of the 7th day (Gen. 2:1-3), in which God rests, becomes the pattern for the Israelite and Christian understanding of work and worship. This 7th day of rest is built into the fabric of creation and enables work to retain its dignity. "Creation is set on a time scheme comprising days of work and rest. This is stated explicitly in 2:3. . . . Days of work are not the only days that God has created."[39] Work is only one part of a bigger whole; rest is the other part. Work has its limits. The 7th day, on which God rested from His labors, has a purpose beyond what work can achieve and is qualitatively different from the others. God introduces something new. Rest is built into the fabric of creation; it's part of the design. Moreover, God uniquely blesses this day and declares it holy (2:3); it stands as a gift to humankind that regulates and enriches human life. The 7th day (and later Sabbath) seems to be a high point in the first creation account, one that involves delight in God, one another and creation.[40]

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[39]Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*.

[40] Some theologians go so far as to say that "the ultimate goal of mission is the Sabbath *shalom* of God: the threefold harmony of God, creation and humankind, which will finally obtain after Christ comes again and the kingdom is consummated." (Stevens, *The Other Six Days,* p. 204). While I agree that the ultimate

This concluding 7th day of creation creates a rhythm that will affect the whole of creation, and there are obvious echoes of the later Sabbath command (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). Furthermore, when it becomes the 4th commandment—"remember to keep the Sabbath holy"—a conspicuous amount of explanatory words are attached to it, apparently, to underscore its importance. Sabbath-keeping in the Old Testament seems to be primarily about what we don't do; people "make/keep the Sabbath holy" by observing it and not doing forbidden work on that day (e.g., Exod. 20:11; Ezek. 20:20; Jer. 17:22,27; Neh. 13:22).

Jesus observed the Sabbath but also reframed the understanding of it in His day (e.g., Mark 2:27-28); in so doing, He asserted His authority. Even Jesus, who did so much, didn't heal everyone. There was much He left undone, and much He left for his followers to do. After the resurrection, the early church (in Acts) seems to turn the "Lord's Day" (i.e., the 1st day of the week, see Acts 20:7) into a distinctly Christianized version of the prior Jewish Sabbath. From the earliest days of the church, people have debated whether a day of Sabbath is still in effect (Rom. 14:5-6; Gal. 4:10). This is a somewhat complex issue historically, but over the years, Sunday became Christians' one-day-in-seven for both rest and worship. It's fascinating how the early church changed the day and shifted the focus in worship; and this staggering shift must be accounted for historically.[41] The basic Christian conception lies in the truth that Jesus Christ has

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consummation awaits Christ's return, I'm more convinced exegetically by those who claim that the creation of humankind, not God's Sabbath, is at the climax of the Gen.1 story (e.g., Cosden, *Heavenly Good of Earthly Work,* pp. 85-86).

[41] It serves as one piece of evidence that something dramatic happened to the early disciples after the resurrection.

worked (1st day) and because of His work, humans begin with rest and then work out of it.

The "Sabbath-rest" in these "last days" and in the eschaton, mentioned in both Hebrews (4:3-11) and Revelation (14:13; 21:1; 22:3-5) seems to be the culmination. The "new heavens and new earth," or ultimate "Sabbath-rest," involves communion with God and a full and final salvation. "Sabbath-rest is the threefold rest of God, humankind and creation. This is the ultimate goal of God's saving and consummating work and therefore our true destiny."[42]

A proper sense of rest protects man from the excesses and abuses related to work. God models rest and provided it for humankind's benefit before anything went askew. God's resting points forward to the institution of worship (Sabbath) and even an eternal quality of resting. There's something about observing this 7th day (or later Sabbath observance or Christian worship gatherings) which shows trust in God. Our work mimics or settles into the context of God's work. Resting is one way we participate in an act of God. There is a subtle arrogance in thinking one is so important and indispensable that s/he cannot claim rest. A vital break in work must be part of our understanding of work. Biblically, this special sanctification of time is introduced chronologically before the establishment of a holy place (e.g., altars, tabernacle).

Work may be necessary for leisure, but leisure itself cannot compensate for a lack of God-oriented work or the apparent meaninglessness of work (see Eccl. 2:17-23). "Without spiritual orientation, time 'off the job' soon becomes as futile as time 'on the job.' When man loses the sacred significance of work and of himself as worker, he soon

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[42] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 102.

loses the sacred meaning of time and of life."[43] Long ago God gave us the Sabbath for

rest, with six other days dedicated to work. The Sabbath is for rest, but all seven days

belong to God. As part of Christian worship and as a change of pace, the

Sabbath/Sunday provides a chance for believers to reflect upon who they are and who

they are becoming and how they are utilizing their abilities and opportunities.

Work is not an ultimate value in itself.[44] Only God can provide life's meaning

and fulfillment. But work, when understood as derived from God and done in service to

God, comprises the bulk of humankind's assignment. Even the Sabbath commandment

insists "Six days you shall labor." "This means that leisure, freedom from work, actually

begins at work."[45]

The Fall of Humankind and Its Effect on Work

There was a built-in boundary for Adam and Eve as they fulfilled their

commission—one and only one tree from which they must not eat (Gen. 2:15-16).[46] As a

result of disobeying God, consequences ensue for humankind as it relates to work. The

ground becomes cursed (3:17) and trials become associated with their work (3:18ff),[47]

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[43] Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*, 33.

[44] These observations confirm that work is part of God's intention for humanity and that work is a good thing for humanity (i.e., a person who is able to work seems diminished if denied work); however, it's also worth noting that this high scriptural value given to work is not intended to provide unnecessary discouragement for those who, for whatever reason, are unable to work (e.g., disabled, etc.). Issues causing and emanating from these complications lie beyond the scope of this paper.

[45] Doug Sherman and William Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1987), 204.

[46] The text does not state why this prohibition existed, but it was the God-planned way for them to work and live; however, they acted autonomously/defiantly of God.

[47] The text explicitly records that Adam becomes especially alienated from that which he was made (the ground) and his ground-working task (i.e., be fruitful, subdue, cultivate, preserve) and Eve also becomes especially alienated from that which she was made (Adam) and her childbearing task (i.e., be fruitful, replenish, fill).

but work itself is not cursed; in fact, the destiny of man is that he should work the ground (3:23). But God sends man outside the Garden of Eden to work because he mistrusted his Maker. Man remains a co-worker with God even though it's more difficult (see also Gen. 5:29). This act of hubris destroyed so much. Death itself will result. It's worth restating that work predated sin and the subsequent fall and punishment of Adam and Eve—there was work to do in Paradise before anything went wrong—but something did go terribly wrong. Sin—chosen evil— enters, and its perpetrators are culpable.

As such, work shares in human limitations and must not be idealized. All kinds of human labor have their "thorns and thistles" (3:18), and exhausting work (3:19) follows all people. Work becomes hard, burdensome and painful. The relational sense of community is broken and enmity is experienced; that is, social contexts like workplaces become less than ideal. The creation itself "groans" (Rom. 8:22) and is "subjected to futility" (Rom. 8:20) because of human rebellion; evidently, man dragged the whole creation downward.[48] It is in this many-faceted working world where many people see and feel the Fall.

God's commission to multiply and work the earth was not removed, but things spiral downward quickly from Gen. 4 onward. Cain kills Abel in his workplace and Cain's curse is related to his work (4:11-14).[49] But good things come from Cain and his

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[48] Cosden suggests "because of his unique identity uniting both heaven (the image of God) and earth (the rest of creation), when Adam fell spiritually he took with him that to which he was joined naturally, as a natural being, and thus that which he was responsible for—the non-human creation." *(Heavenly Good of Earthly Work,* p. 71) Based on Rom. 8 and Gal. 4, that seems possible, although it seems adequate to suggest simply that once man sinned, the whole scheme of things under his domain was damaged or dislocated.

[49] The claim that man (Cain) himself is under a divine curse is introduced in Gen. 4:11. And Gal. 3:10-13 makes it clear that the only way for man to be redeemed from the curse of the law is through the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. The curse and all the effects of it will be eradicated in the end (Rev. 22:3).

descendants (see page 17). Then man-made evil hits a new peak and God starts over with

Noah. After the flood, God explicitly re-establishes His commission with Noah (and

humankind) in 9:6-7—keep spreading out and increasing.

The Bible also draws our attention to the way humankind is endangered through

the development of civilization. The song of Lamech (4:23-24) shows how metal-

working can also produce weapons of destruction which can serve man's desire for

power (and showing off to his wives) through violence. The story of Babel (11:1-9)

illustrates how building techniques can also tempt us to rise beyond human limitations in

a God-dishonoring way.[50] These excesses which endanger man arise from both an

individual (i.e., Lamech) and a group (i.e., Babel). People, living and working together,

hold remarkable possibilities for both progress and destruction. "Each of us is

unrepeatable, a unique bearer and reflector of God. Nobody else can reflect God's light

in exactly the same way as you can. But none of us is an independent person. We live in

a web of dependencies, not only on God, but also on a world of people, including people

who preceded us."[51]

Furthermore, these contingencies often complicate work. Through our own

human nature, inherited from Adam & Eve, and evidenced by our choices, we confront

evil—both within ourselves and within our world. There is something about us that

rebels against God and His ways.[52] Each day brings reports of new evils committed and

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[50] Humans decide to build upward in Gen. 11 rather than outward as God had instructed them. They again resist and twist his commissioned work so God again intervenes decisively—graciously scattering them and directing them back to His good purposes for humankind.

[51] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 40.

[52] This rebellion is no small infraction. It is an affront to God (i.e., sinful) to trust or worship any thing or person over God, and this choice cuts man off from the true source of life (i.e., God), so it's no wonder that deadly, life-crushing consequences ensue.

old evils redone—something is wrong about human life and the world we live in. The Fall affects workers, creation and work. Workers can feel trapped or become greedy; the natural creation doesn't always yield the desired raw materials; and work itself can become lifelessly monotonous.

Work is truly a double-edged sword for fallen creatures in a fallen world. It fulfills yet frustrates, it gives an identity yet consumes time and it can be exhilarating yet it often seems that one has never done enough. It meets many of man's needs but definitely not all of them. Hard work satisfies, overwork destroys. The Fall is real and no one can construct a life insulated from it. The goodness of work simultaneous with the fallenness of workers and the world provide two parts of a polarity we experience. The Bible says that work is good yet affected by the Fall; it is dignified, yet bothersome.

Good and evil are tangled together now in complex ways regarding work;[53] that is, the world's mess and grandeur are interwoven. People can work hard to create bad things that prove profitable (e.g., pornography, crime, strip mining); and people can produce good things that fail to turn a profit. What one builds for good can also be used for evil (e.g., computers). We cannot be naïve about work in a fallen world—we should expect injustice (Eccl. 5:8). We must seek forgiveness from God for the imperfections and omissions in our own work. We need to take responsibility when we err, and we need to turn over even our failures to the God who forgives and redeems. Man is needy and always has been as a creature, and sin has increased mankind's need. Nevertheless, "Intrinsically work is good for us, good for the world and good for God."[54] Our jobs

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[53] Will Messenger, "Faith and Work: Ships Passing in the Night?," in *Christianity in the Workplace DMin curriculum* (Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary: 2004).

[54] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 124.

cannot provide ultimate self-fulfillment so we should not live only to work; nor can we find fulfillment solely apart from our jobs so we should not denigrate work and view it as a necessary evil (or a result of the curse). It's not easy to "steer the middle path between the vilification and the glorification of work."[55] Work is not an unfortunate consequence of sin—it's not a punishment. Obviously, evil affects work but work itself is good, even when affected by evil. "Just as each human has inherent dignity despite sin, so work has inherent value despite sin."[56] Even after the Fall, man's work is placed alongside God's work (Ps. 8, 104). And man never works alone; God is always there working as well. To this day, work remains to be done.

How We Work – Proverbs, Historical Narratives, Prophets, Epistles

Old Testament wisdom literature helps a person come to terms with the demands life makes. This wisdom, in the form of aphorisms, vivid comparisons and contrasts, passes along experience to the one who seeks understanding. For instance, "the sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he will not even bring it back to his mouth" (Prov. 19:24).

Proverbial wisdom condones industry and condemns sloth (Prov. 10:4; 12:24,27; 13:4; 14:23; 21:5; Eccl. 10:18). "Since Israel's teachers know what man is like, they try their best to ward off laziness. . . . Observation teaches that laziness deprives a man of Yahweh's gifts"[57] (e.g., Prov. 24:30-34). The wise person goes promptly to work, without anyone goading him on, and should not let himself be put to shame by an animal (cf. Prov. 6:6-11; Jer. 8:7). The wise man knows that laziness is characterized by:

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[55] Hardy, *The Fabric of This World*, xvi.

[56] Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God*, 86n.

[57] Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 130.

invented excuses (22:13; 26:13-16), excessive sleep (6:9; 19:15; 24:33) and being driven

by the pleasures of the moment (21:25). One either works and profits from it or lets the

chance slip and suffers (14:23; 20:4). The teachers of wisdom reinforce what the author

of Genesis began to teach—humankind is called to work and should take up its Creator's

command to work.

There is also the balancing truth that while God normally blesses man's labors

(10:22; 16:11), God is not obligated to do so (Prov. 16:1-5,9).[58] It's also possible to

"build in vain" (Ps. 127:1ff.). Limits are set on humanity's independence and capability.

And riches can be worse than poverty (15:16) and righteousness (11:4), especially when

they lead to a lack of integrity (19:1) or quarreling (17:1) or hatred (15:17), or come via

oppression (16:8). Moreover, success can lure men to false confidence (11:28). "Thus

Israel's wisdom teaches a right understanding of work. Man has to accept the rules; but

above all he has to recognize the Lord of the rules."[59] Work is a gift from God for which

man ought to be thankful (Eccl. 2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18-19), yet it is also limited and

frustrating. Work has a certain futility and temporariness to it; it must be done again and

again (Eccl. 2:14-23).[60]

Many of the historical narratives pick up on the Old Testament themes of God's

blessing and God's deliverance as applied to work (e.g., David, Nehemiah).

Occasionally, in the Old Testament the Spirit of God is said to explicitly enable skillful

work (e.g., the craftsmanship of Bezalel in Exod. 31:2-3; the planning of David in 1 Chr.

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[58] Compare, for instance, with the slogan for the Ben Franklin Elementary School (in Lawrence, NJ): "If I work hard, I will succeed." It's a helpful, upbeat and memorable slogan (especially for young children), and I'd be remiss to suggest the opposite. But a more realistic and closer Biblical parallel would be: "The harder I work, the better the odds that I will succeed, but there's no guarantee (in a fallen world)."

[59] Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, 133.

[60] Eccl. 2:17-6:9 shows the limits of toil, advancement, riches, effort and pleasures.

28:11-12). God blesses man by giving the energy and power and creativity to flourish in particular undertakings, such as having children, negotiating deals, and fighting wars. He helps man succeed. God also delivers men from the inevitable failures and setbacks which govern their lives in a fallen and fragile and competitive world (e.g., Joseph, Mordecai). God helps him when he fails (e.g., Samson) or confronts the failures of others (e.g., Moses). Even after failure, God gives new opportunities (e.g., Jonah, John Mark).

Similarly, the prophets reject any human achievement which comes by oppression and injustice (see Hab. 2:9-12; Jer. 22:13-17). In short, other workers should be treated with respect and compassion as fellow beings made in the image of God. Individual self-interest must be balanced with the community good. God frees us for each other. We should ask ourselves, "Whose happiness do I dream of?" The New Testament epistles pick up on this practical commitment to generosity and others-centered living. Those who follow Christ cannot ignore the needy (Jam. 1:27; 1 John 3:17-18) or the poor (Gal. 2:10).

At some level work is an expression of ourselves although it's not the centerpiece of our identity. We should not short-change ourselves spiritually by being content with less than our fullest and best investment of God-given talent and skill. "The Church's approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to exhorting him not to be drunk and disorderly in his leisure hours, and to come to church on Sundays. What the Church should be telling him is this: that the very first demand that his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables."[61]

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[61] Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?*, 58.

In the New Testament epistles, Scripture admonishes one to respect authority in one's labors (1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18), yet first and foremost the Christian worker is to please God as his supreme master (Eph. 6:5-7; Col. 3:23; Titus 2:10; 1 Pet. 2:19). As followers of God, we are personally interacting with Him as we do our job, and we do our job well because we love Him; He is with us, as He promised, to enable us. God is the believer's main boss and one must neither assume that work is a part of life that doesn't count to God nor that it can be done properly without God.

Paul even uses hope in the imminent return of Christ to reinforce a high view of work and criticizes those who are tempted to ignore it (2 Thes. 3:10-12; 1Thes. 4:11-12). He mentions the place of self-discipline and character development which come from work, in addition to its means of subsistence (1 Tim. 5:8). We are commanded to work (Eph. 4:28) "as unto the Lord" (Eph. 6:7). Paul worked as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3, 20:4) and appealed to his own example as a self-supporting, hard worker often (1 Cor. 4:12; 1Thes. 2:9; 2 Thes. 3:8).[62]

When asked, "For whom do you work?," it's accurate to say that we work for ourselves (and our dependents), for a particular company, and for the well-being of our communities (and even society), but we also can respond that we work for God. We can

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[62] Biblically, God calls for the skilled work of craftsmen, designers, stonecutters, masons, carpenters, embroiderers, weavers and perfumers in creating His tabernacle (Exod. 35:35; 36:37; 37:29; 39:3,22; 1 Chr. 22:15). The Old Testament discusses farming (Deut. 24:19; Judges 19:16; Ruth 2:3,7; Job 1:10; Prov. 28:19), felling timber (1 Kings 5:6; 2 Chr. 2:8), metal-work (1 Kings 7:14; Isa. 54:16), potters, (1 Chr. 4:23; Isa. 45:9, 64:8; Jer. 18:3), musicians (1 Chr. 9:33), priests (Num. 18:2-7; 1 Chr. 28:13), scholars (Eccl. 12:9-10; see also Matt. 13:52), transportation (2 Chr. 2:18), politicians (Gen. 41:41; Esther 10:3), prostitution (Joshua 2:1; Ezek. 23:29), sailors (Ps. 107:23), blacksmiths (Isa. 44:12), overseeing a labor force (1 Kings 11:28; 2 Kings 12:11; Neh. 3-4; 6:15), investment (Prov. 31:16), trade (Ezek. 27:14-24, fishermen (Ezek. 47:10) and even paychecks (Ezra 6:8; Jer. 22:13). The New Testament also mentions a wide range of trades and occupations, following the usual social custom of identifying people with the trade they followed. Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), Matthew and Zaccheus were tax collectors (Matt. 9:1; Luke 19:2), Lydia was a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14), Simon was a tanner (Acts 9:43), Demetrius was a silversmith (Acts 19:24), Luke was a doctor (Col. 4:14) and we learn of an unnamed military leader (Luke 7:2,8). Even James 4:13 and Rev. 18:11-13 speak of trade merchants.

think of God as being our employer or boss. Of course, a believer's relationship with God is much more than one of employee to boss, but that's one image it includes. As we work, we serve God, who gave us tasks to do to achieve His purposes in the world.

Many believers affirm that "God cares for them *as* they work. But they may be hesitant to embrace the thought that God is actually at work *in* their work. For them, the church is where God is at work; family is where God is at work,"[63] but that tends to be where His purposes stop. The testimony of Scripture, however, doesn't support this dichotomy. God is interested in all spheres of life, including our daily work. The infinite God lays claim to "the earth and all its fullness" (Ps. 24:1), but God is also acquainted with the hairs on our heads (Matt. 10:30), knows our thoughts (Matt. 5:27) and demands that we "be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). He wants us to cast all our cares upon Him (1 Pet. 5:7). If it is "in Him that we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28), then He is concerned with us and our seemingly petty lives (see Matt. 6:25ff.) All of our lives—weekend and weekday, professional and personal—are God's domain.

One is always individually responsible before God. We cannot make a division of our activities because God is part of everything. Every effort we make matters to God, and when we look at it this way, it elevates ordinary tasks and makes sinful or superfluous ones unattractive. The gospel applies to all people and involves every aspect of their lives, including work (Col. 3:17-24). Also, every Christian is called to be Christ's representative in his/her time and in his/her place.

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[63] Volf, "God at Work." (emphasis his).

Jesus and Work

Jesus dignifies work by His personal example. Day after day for many years, this carpenter of Nazareth handled tools to the glory of God. As a tradesman (i.e., blue collar worker), He incorporated the activities of the workaday world into God's purpose for His life, and in so doing, the God-man lost none of His glory. Jesus entered the ordinary aspects of human life, including work, and He began to show us and teach us about the kind of life for which we were made.[64] Jesus provides a tangible, visible expression of the presence of God in a human body and life (1 John 1:1-3).

As our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ "reconciles us to God" (2 Cor. 5:18-19) "by giving Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). Through His sinless life, substitutionary atonement, and subsequent resurrection, He made peace with God (Rom. 5:1,6) for sinners (i.e., ungodly persons). This is the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Jesus Christ, "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), enables human persons, who were made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), to "put on the new self/man, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." (Col. 3:10; see also 2 Cor. 4:1-6). Man, who was called into partnership with God, fails in his task but Jesus Christ gives hope because as high priest He made the once-for-all sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 7:11-28; 10:1-18). Old Testament saints had looked forward to this new covenant when all could know God more personally and directly (e.g., Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:26-27). Jesus came to accomplish God's work for Him (John 5:17). Because of the work of the crucified and risen Christ

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[64] In reference to eating and drinking and washing the disciples' feet, Oswald Chambers writes: "Every phase of our actual life has its counterpart in the life of Jesus. Our Lord realized His relationship to the Father even in the most menial work" *(My Utmost For His Highest,* July 11th entry).

"who brings us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18), humankind's stewardship of the world need not lead to despair and self-destruction, and the image of God can once more emerge in all its freedom. Man can have a restored relationship with his God and he can co-operate with his Creator again. "Work is not our enemy, nor are other people. Sin is our enemy. And only Christ is adequate to deal with sin."[65]

Of the 52 parables Jesus told, 45 had a workplace context,[66] and nearly all treat work as positive. One that doesn't, the parable of the rich farmer (Luke 12:13-21), is where Jesus rejects an undue importance given to work. Work cannot make life secure and man does not control his own destiny. The overwhelming testimony of Jesus, though, assumes and affirms work.[67]

The Gospel of Matthew includes the final challenge Jesus Christ gave to His disciples—His great commission. The risen and exalted Christ says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, therefore go and make disciples of all nations." This last commission reminds us of the cultural (or creation) mandate back in Genesis; in many respects, Jesus fulfills and renews the commission of Gen. 1:28 in this "new creation mandate."[68] The fundamental human tasks of subduing, filling, cultivating

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[65] Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God*, 107, 112.

[66] Hillman, *Faith @ Work*, 142. He also indicates that 122 of Jesus' 132 public appearances in the NT were in the workplace and that 39 of the 40 divine encounters in the book of Acts were in the workplace (not the temple).

[67] Thus G. MacLeod writes: "I simply argue that the cross be raised again at the centre of the marketplace as well as on the steeple of the church. I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap; at a crossroad so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek . . . at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because that is where he died. And that is what he died about. And that is where churchmen should be and what churchmen should be about." *(Only One Way Left,* 1956, p. 38). Jesus wants us in the world as transformed persons, His representatives.

[68] Much like the tower of Babel episode in Gen. 11, the Great Commission and Pentecost episodes (Acts 2) show God again spreading out His people and inviting them to disperse for the benefit of all nations. The tower represents human-made stability and a desire for power and self-sufficiency. The temptation to settle

and making have never been rescinded or usurped; as such, they don't need to be reiterated in the New Testament. The second commission expands but doesn't replace the first. This Great Commission is about discipleship. The main command is to "make disciples" through the participles of "baptizing" and "teaching." It includes evangelism as a first response of faith (i.e., baptizing) but extends beyond it to "all that I have commanded you" (i.e., teaching). Jesus wanted followers who were fully committed to God's kingdom with no compartmentalization but full obedience—"doing all that I commanded."[69] Jesus wants to use His followers to cooperate with Him as He remakes persons from all people-groups to become like Him.[70]

The Great Commandment(s)—love God with our whole being and love our neighbor as our self— also speak to the issue of work, at least indirectly. God is sovereign and all pervasive so our response must include our vertical love for God which can hardly be separated from our horizontal love we extend in service to those all around us. In fact, according to Jesus, the entire Old Testament hangs on these commandments (Matt. 22:37-40).

> The second commandment depends upon the first, and without the first, it is a delusion and a snare. Much of our present trouble and disillusionment have come from putting the second commandment before the first. If we put our neighbor first,

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down, seek security in our possessions and ignore God's command to keep reaching out is strong. The tower-building mentality and tendency toward ethnic/national/personal cliquishness must be overcome. Our mission is bigger than what has already been done. God calls us onward and outward in our Christian life. Hence, the term "mission" has traditionally meant crossing cultural boundaries for the sake of the gospel.

[69] In Matthew's gospel, the phrase "all that I have commanded you" may refer to the five other great discourses in 5:1-7:27; 9:35-11:1; 13:1-52; 18:1-19:2; 24:1-26:2.

[70] This commission was not given to one person or church; it was given to the whole body of Jesus Christ. It doesn't just apply to preachers or missionaries or famous Christians or megachurches; it belongs in the hands of all church members.

we are putting man above God, and that is what we have been doing ever since we began to worship humanity and make man the measure of all things.[71]

But it would also be inaccurate to conclude that our hearts and love for God are right even though we may not be serving others and being a blessing to those around us. Wrong. We must learn to care for others and the world out of a deep love for God.

Work has begun to be changed from a burden to a glad response through Jesus' work of salvation. "Work, like the cross, can be tough, but this fact does not take away the possibility of sacredness."[72] Jesus "has spoken and is still speaking. Humanity remains his project, not its own, and his initiatives are always at work among us."[73] It takes Jesus (who is the fulness of God's image) in a person to become man as man was intended to be; Christ is the last and true Adam (1 Cor. 15:45.) Thankfully, a believer is "in Christ," and Christ is in the believer (Col. 1:27). Given this spiritual reality, believers can get on with the kind of godly work to which they were initially called. Or looking forward,

> in the Spirit we do have the potential, to some degree at least, to anticipate the new creation, to bring about within this creation states of affairs that anticipate the future glorification of ourselves, of nature, and of work. We can imagine ourselves doing it differently from Adam and Eve, Cain, and the others. And we can enact these possibilities in our work.[74]

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[71] Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?*, 61.

[72] David Johnson Rowe, *Faith at Work: A Celebration of All We Do* (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys Publishing, 1994), 21. Note that Martin Luther also spoke about there being a cross in the workplace, with the possibility of sanctification and productive suffering. The cross is the pinnacle event of obedience. As Miroslav Volf stated, "The self-giving love manifested on the cross and demanded by it lies at the core of the Christian faith. … The incarnation of that divine love in a world of sin leads to the cross." See Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 25. Christians can embrace this abandonment as a self-donation to God.

[73] Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1998), 33.

[74] Darrell Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2006), 100.

The Kingdom of God

Another important dimension of Jesus' message which relates to our work lives is His teaching on the Kingdom of God.[75]   The reign of God—His eternal, unchallenged reign—is a relentless Old Testament theme (e.g., Ps. 93), but Jesus inaugurated a new dimension of God's rule in human lives. We now live between Jesus Christ's first and second comings. With His first coming, He inaugurated God's kingdom but it has not yet come in its fullness.[76] "God's supreme goal is to restore all things that have been corrupted by evil. The Old Testament word for this restoration of peace, justice, and harmony is 'shalom.' The New Testament phrase for it is 'the coming of the kingdom.'"[77]

Shalom is the way things are supposed to be and the full coming of the kingdom depends on the coming of the King, who will return "with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27). "In the Bible, *shalom* means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, all under the arch of God's love."[78]   In the meantime,

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[75] Mark and Luke use the phrase "kingdom of God," as does John (although he only employs it twice—John3:3,5), whereas Matthew prefers "kingdom of heaven." This concept is used more than 100 times in the Gospels, beginning with Jesus' first sermon (Mark 1:15). "The kingdom is not a realm, a territory, but the rule of God as King (Luke 19:12,15; Rev.11:15; 1 Cor. 15:24). More accurately the Kingdom is the *rule of the sovereign* (God expressing his will and powerful presence) plus *the response of the subjects* (as they yield to the sway of the sovereign). . . . The Kingdom involves both rule and response." (Stevens, *The Other Six Days,* p. 183, emphasis his) God, the King, is saving and taking control of His world as only He can through Jesus' life and teachings, and the work of the Holy Spirit in His church and the world.

[76] For instance, in Matthew's gospel, verses which show that this kingdom is "already" (i.e., now, present) include 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 12:28; 21:31; 23:13. Others which emphasize the "not yet" (i.e., the dimension of still future realization of God's rule) include 8:11; 24; 25:31ff. The kingdom of God/heaven has begun but it awaits final consummation; it is already in place (i.e., present) yet still emerging (i.e., future).

[77] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, xii.

[78] Nicholas Wolterstorff quoted in Ibid., 15.

> The disciple of Jesus is learning from him how to live in the Kingdom of God. I am learning from Jesus to live my life as he would live my life if he were I. I am not necessarily learning to do everything he did, but I am learning how to do everything I do in the manner in which he did all that he did. . . . New Testament language for this is to do my job 'in the name of Jesus.'[79]

The idea of "job discipleship" is an unavoidable aspect of learning from Jesus how to lead our whole lives. "Successful living depends on fitting our small kingdom inside God's big kingdom, always recalling where we got our dominion in the first place. Each of us is king or queen over a little. God's kingdom is 'over all,' as the psalmists liked to say."[80] Willard defines our kingdom as the "range of our effective will . . . the realm that is uniquely our own, where our choice determines what happens."[81] Our bodies, our thoughts, our things, and to some degree, our work, fit within this realm. God has placed a part of this world under our management. As we make choices, we should ask, "Will this be profitable for the kingdom of God?"

The "not yet" aspect of God's kingdom means that other kingdoms currently exist that oppose His present rule on earth. God permits persons and forces of evil to hold some sway. This kingdom of His can be entered or resisted. But His kingdom has always existed and will never end (Ps. 145:13; Dan. 7:14; Rev. 1:8) and cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:27-28). "It has never been in trouble and never will be. It is not something that human beings produce, or ultimately, can hinder. We do have an invitation to be a part of it, but if we refuse we only hurt ourselves."[82] Furthermore, we must acknowledge that conflict exists between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world (1 Cor. 5:9-

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[79] Dallas Willard, "How to Be a Disciple," *Christian Century*, April 22-29 1998, 431.

[80] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 106.

[81] Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, 21.

[82] Ibid., 25.

10; Phil. 2:15; 1 Pet. 4:3-4; or see Mark 10:34-38); hence, workers in God's kingdom can

expect resistance and difficulties in this fallen world. We can expect to encounter people

with very different values and worldviews vying for influence.[83] A Christian has left the

dominion of darkness and come under the benevolent kingdom of God's son (Col. 1:13).

The reign of God is now contested so it's a mistake to think we will find heaven on earth,

but the ultimate victory of King Jesus is as sure/inevitable as His resurrection.

We are to seek the kingdom of God first (Matt. 6:33) and pray for its advance

(Matt. 6:10),[84] knowing that God has always been the only One who truly reigns (Ps. 93;

Phil. 2:5-11; Rev. 21-22). God is still at work establishing His kingdom. He invites,

woos, convicts, gives dreams, strengthens bodies, stimulates ideas, heals, delivers, frees.

We can choose to hear His voice and follow Him. The first step is conversion (i.e.,

regeneration) but the destination is to become like Christ (Rom. 8:29). In one sense,

Jesus' kingdom is not *of* this world (John 18:36)—it originates elsewhere—but it is *for*

this world (John 17:18).

Eschatological Implications

It will be helpful to sketch out the key biblical texts and corresponding theological

ideas regarding the end of all things, although it's extremely difficult to arrive at a

biblically consistent and theologically satisfying resolution/synthesis. The Bible ends

with a glorious vision of perfect fulfillment and order and community. Eternity is our

eventual destiny. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the

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[83] The Christian life is a journey with dear brothers and sisters in Christ, but we also live as pilgrims, resident aliens, in this world (1 Pet. 2:11; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 11:13-16).

[84] Christians are called to choose between a kingdom centered on God and one centered on money (Matt. 6:19-24). They will either serve money and use God (as a means to achieve wealth or excuse their behavior), or they will serve God and use money to do so.

first earth had passed away. . . . There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. . . . I am making everything new! . . . No longer will there be any curse." (Rev. 21:1,4,5; 22:3)

The new heavens and new earth had been promised by Isaiah (65:17; 66:22). Jesus Christ predicts that heaven and earth will pass away (Matt. 24:35)[85] but He also indicates that our work has significance in the world to come (Matt. 25:14-46) and will lead to the blessed reward of more work. Without question, there will be a judgment and God promises rewards to people in everyday jobs, based on their attitude and conduct (Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:23-4:1). Our faithfulness now with the resources and responsibilities God has given us will count in eternity (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:1-5). And somehow these rewards may extend to nations (Rev. 21:24,26). In 1 Cor. 3:12-15, the apostle Paul indicates that high-quality, durable work—who we are and what we build—will stand the test of divine judgment (i.e., gold, silver, costly stones) while worthless work will not stand the test (i.e., wood, hay, straw). The reality of coming judgment (i.e., being called to account) can provide incentive to do better and push us forward to improve systems.

In Rom. 8:19-21, Paul indicates that creation, which has been subjected to frustration (i.e., the effects of the Fall) will be liberated. All living things will not be subject to death and decay as they are now. Creation is personified as a woman in labor waiting for the birth of her child (Rom. 8:22). The full manifestation of what this means will not come until the end, the consummation of all things. But for now the effects of sin are evident, even though Christ has won the decisive victory and has promised to some day lift the curse from creation (Rev. 22:3).

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[85] It's hard to say for sure what the future is for the whole material creation.

Interestingly, some appeal to 2 Pet. 3:13 as evidence that the physical universe is not destined for destruction but renewal, while others think that 2 Pet. 3:10-11 indicates that God has created a world that is time-bound and temporary. Surely our physical bodies will be transformed into glorious bodies some day (Phil. 3:21) when there is no more death or pain or decay (Rev. 21:4), yet Jesus never discards (i.e., lays down) His physical, resurrected body.[86] God has promised to preserve the earth (Gen. 9) yet there will be no more sea (Rev. 21:1) or sun (Rev. 22:5). Furthermore, "good" things like our bodies (2 Cor. 5:4) and marriage (Mark 12:25) seem to be radically altered in the new creation.

Much seems to hinge on one's interpretation of "making all things new" in Rev. 21:5. Is God making all existing things into new, transformed things (i.e., resurrecting and perfecting material aspects of this world) or is He making brand new things (replacing or almost creating all over again) or some hybrid thereof? My tradition has emphasized that little, if anything, other than the overtly spiritual activities of evangelism and prayer for people carry over into eternity, so I will focus on the merits of other potentially biblically defensible alternatives.

> God's program of redemption is all encompassing. Wherever life has been corrupted, it needs to be reformed. . . . Scripture appears to teach not only that there shall be a new heaven and earth but also that it shall be *this* earth renewed. In Revelation 21 the

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[86] Jesus' resurrected body was recognizable and occupied space (Luke 24:39-43; John 21:27; but not always immediately so—Jn. 21:4) yet different and not bound by previous time-place constraints (Luke 24:31; John 20:26). Jesus has the same body (continuity) but it's a body with additional, transformed properties (discontinuity). Jesus' same physical body has been raised from the dead and therein lies our hope (1 Cor. 15:11-24), but it seems to be of a different kind (1 Cor. 15:35-55—imperishable, more spiritual). There is continuity (i.e., it's not wholly unrelated) but there is also necessary change. "What we will be has not yet been made known . . . but we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). Cosden insists, therefore, that Jesus (the true Adam) in His resurrected physical body, becomes the paradigm or prototype for salvation *(The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work,* p. 53). "While Adam was created *in order* to image God, Christ is said *in fact* to image the invisible God. . . . Jesus is the fulfillment of Adam" (p. 67, emphasis his; see 1 Cor. 15: 22,45; Col. 1:15; Rom. 8:2).

city of God descends to us. We do not go to heaven; heaven comes to us. . . . In a thousand ways, God will put right what's wrong with his glorious creation.[87]

Or, as another scholar suggests,

Finally, God makes sure that none of what is true, good, and beautiful in our work will be lost. In God, everything that we have done in cooperation with God will be preserved. In the world to come, our work will not disappear. We ourselves will be followed by our works, as it says in the book of Revelation. That makes sense if our identity partly resides in our work and its achievements. . . . The results of our work—the cumulative results of generations of workers across the globe—will also be preserved in the world to come. They may be preserved just in God's memory; or they may be preserved as actual building blocks of that new world.[88]

It's hard to know how literally to interpret these apocalyptic writings where the apostle John attempts to describe the indescribable.[89] We need all the help we can get from one another in order to try to understand what the biblical image of "new heavens and new earth" might entail (i.e., what the kingdom of God looks like in its glorified state—heaven).[90] But whether or not the product of work lasts into eternity, our labor is full of eternal implications because it reflects our obedience and affects other people.

Referring to Isa. 60:3 and Rev. 21:24-26, Paul Stevens suggests "Even business activity may last and find its place, purged of sin, in the new heaven and the new earth."[91] Moreover, he finds that "the prophetic literature of the Old Testament indicates that the

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[87] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 117, 137 (emphasis his), 139.

[88] Volf, "God at Work." Similarly, Cosden argues that "from a Christian view of work, all human work (and not just 'religious work') has eternal value. . . . The heavenly good of earthly work refers to the idea that our ordinary work affects and in some ways actually adds to (though it does not cause, determine, or bring about) the ultimate shape of eternity—the new creation" *(The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work,* p. 2; also see p. 46).

[89] Clearly, the book of Revelation is an apostolic letter of encouragement meant to stimulate believers to remain faithful to God in a time of intense persecution when it would have been easy to conclude that God's plans were derailed or defunct.

[90] It's also worth noting that the image of heaven in Rev. 21-22 is not a return to the garden of Eden but involves a heavenly Jerusalem. It's "interesting that a city, at best an ambivalent product of human work (Gen. 4:17), represents the future of God's and our new created reality" (Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work,* p.75).

[91] Quoted at a conference for Christian Business Ministries Canada in Leduc Alliance Church (Jan. 13-14, 2006) in Grant McDowell, "Conference Features Solid 'Faith at Work' Teaching," *Business.Life* 2006.

new heavens and new earth, when they are consummated, will include work (see Isa. 65:21-22)."[92]

> Salvation is both a rescue operation (recovering our lost vocation in Eden) and a completion project (preparing for the final renewal of creation at the second coming of Jesus). Eschatology (the end times) is critical to understanding our vocation as Christians in this world. . . . The whole of our human existence makes sense in the light of the *eschaton,* the end.[93]

Will we work? What will we do? As we reign forever (Rev. 22:5), it appears that faithful followers of Christ will do some kind of judging work on behalf of the King (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30), and we will even judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3) at some point in the future. As we share in Christ's rule (2 Tim. 2:12), there's an echo of our sense of vice-regency from the Garden of Eden. Whatever believers will actually do in heaven one day, it will be beautiful, pure and perfect, with unhindered access to God and His goodness. "To dream of a workless paradise is to seek something other than the purpose and plan of God."[94]

This raises important questions. Is it necessary to look forward into the future in order to justify work,[95] or is it adequate to look backward to the still-standing creation mandate? Is our work life better informed from the Garden (despite the Fall) or the eschaton (despite our uncertainty)? Should our model be God's original purposes or their ultimate fulfillment? or both? Paul Stevens posits that the early Christians (e.g., Acts

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[92] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 100.

[93] Ibid., 90-91.

[94] Alan Richardson quoted in Ibid., 114.

[95] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 93. "The significance of secular work depends upon the value of creation, and the value of creation depends upon its final destiny." Cosden agrees, "if work, which has significantly shaped the current order of this creation, is not understood to be an object of God's final salvation, we would then strictly speaking deny the possibility that it is *in itself* ultimately meaningful" *(The Heavenly Good,* p. 31). In other words, if work simply serves as a means of attaining benefits for this world, this life—whether material or self-fulfillment—then work has no transcendent purpose.

2:17) seemed to order their lives not around the beginning but the end,[96] yet it seems a bit

tenuous to build too much off of what we cannot know fully (1 Cor. 13:12). But if this

world and our work in it doesn't last, then it stands to reason that our work amounts to

changing light bulbs in a condemned building, or pointless "busy work" which merely

keeps us occupied and out of trouble, or building sandcastles on the seashore,[97] or

perhaps most shockingly, almost being tortured by a sadistic God.[98] If all non-religious

work is this meaningless, then all Christians should probably quit their jobs now because

these non-religious jobs are extraneous at best and cross to God's ultimate purposes at

worst. But is this what God wants? If all Christians became employed in clergy-like

professions, would that bring about the kingdom of God as God intends?

 As I grapple with these theological meanings and ramifications, I also have found

it helpful to consider two perspectives on hope—the paradox of other-worldly and this-

worldly hope.[99] Other-worldly hope is rooted in the transcendence of God. Worldly

things and societies are nothing compared to God and won't matter in the end; but of

course, they matter a great deal until the end. This view emphasizes personal conversion

and carries a pessimism about the world—the human prospect is so bleak because

everything is hopeless but God. In contrast, this-worldly hope is rooted in the

immanence of God. We and our world are beloved by God, and tainted human acts can

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[96] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 96n. In other words, to understand mankind we should not neglect his destiny (i.e., what God intends him to become).

[97] Volf, "God at Work."

[98] Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 119.

[99] Howard Butt, *At the Edge of Hope: Christian Laity in Paradox* (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), 3-15. The this-worldly viewpoint is advanced by Peter Berger and the other-worldly one by Malcolm Muggeridge at a 1978 conference entitled, The North American Congress on the Laity. I learned of Butt and his book through Miller, *The Faith at Work Movement*, 86, 235. Butt convened the conference and has been a pioneer among Southern Baptists regarding work-faith issues.

point to God's love. This emphasizes social responsibility and carries an optimism about this world—the human prospect is hopeful and can be changed because of God. Both seem to be essential parts of the Christian message, inseparably linked and true, and they need each other. I find these twin affirmations both biblical and true, and it's a challenge to hold them together in my mind and life simultaneously. As Butt aptly observes, "at the edge of hope, the outline of glory and the framework of chaos collide."[100] Obviously, God is both transcendent and immanent, ultimate and intimate.

Now that I have moved chronologically through Scripture looking at what is taught about work in the various genres, I want to address a few themes which emerge from a scriptural study on work.

Work as Ministry/Service

The Greeks hesitated to speak of God as a worker—thinking was far nobler than manual labor to them; hence, two classes emerged: philosophers (i.e., persons of leisure) and slaves destined for the menial tasks of life. This tendency to disparage non-intellectual pursuits goes back in Scripture to before the Exodus—when the disdained, agriculturally-oriented Israelites were assigned as captives by the Egyptians to the distant land of Goshen (Gen. 46:34). In contrast to the attitudes of the times, the Old Testament elevates the place of the worker or laborer, expressed in the Hebrew word *'ebed*, a word which came/comes to be used for servant. The description "servant of God" was applied to Moses and other great Hebrew leaders as a title of honor, not of degradation. Judaism saw no reason to apologize that its great kings Saul and David had been shepherds

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[100] Butt, *At the Edge of Hope*, 8.

previously; in fact, it's a description that God himself will employ later—Good

Shepherd.[101]

      The nation of Israel was to be God's servant (e.g., Isa. 41:9; 43:10) and a servant

to the nations (Isa. 56:6-7). When the people of Israel failed, God undertook this mission

and became His own servant to Israel and to the world (see Isa. 42-3; Phil. 2:5-11).[102]

The word "ministry" comes from the Greek word *diakonia* that means "service."

Fundamentally, a minister is a servant, or put differently, ministry is service and these

words are interchangeable.[103] "Ministry is *service to God and on behalf of God in the*

church and the world. Ministers are people who put themselves *at the disposal of God*

for the benefit of others and God's world. It is not limited by the place where the service

is rendered, the function, the need met, by the title of the person, or even by the overt

reference to Christ."[104]

      Ministry is something that happens both inside and outside the local church. It is

under the umbrella of work as a form of service that its scope widens (and applies to

much ordinary human activity). I will primarily consider work from the standpoint of

one's initial paid employment, but the biblical concept of work is much broader. Work

can be described as energy expended. It transcends paid employment—volunteer

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[101] Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*, 50.

[102] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 136-139. Stevens further suggests that the description of "servant" does a better job of summing up Jesus' ministry than the traditional trilogy of 'prophet, priest and king' (see p. 7n, 134-136).

[103] Typically, Paul opens his epistles by referring to himself as an apostle (*apostolos*, Col. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1) but later calls himself a servant (*diakonos*, Col. 1:23, 25) or other workers like Epaphras fellow-servants (*sundoulos*, Col. 1:7; 4:7) or servants (*diakonos*) or slaves of Christ (*duolos*, Col. 4:12). The strongest exegetical case is likely found in the epistle where Paul refers to himself (and Timothy) as only bondservants/slaves (*douloi*) of Christ Jesus in his greeting (Phil. 1:1), or where he uses both *apostolos* and *duolos* (Rom. 1:1; Titus 1:1). Ministers are servants.

[104] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 133 (emphasis his).

occupations also qualify. Work, paid and unpaid, is an integral part of the believer's

response to God's call. Work is a gift of God to every human being who is capable.

"Work is whatever comes our way that needs our effort."[105] "Young or old, paid or

volunteer, professional career or retirement activity, sacred or secular, for profit or for

fun—every ounce of energy offered to God is a theological statement."[106]

> However unlikely it may seem from our current viewpoint, God equipped us for this
> task by framing our nature to function in a conscious, personal relationship *with* him.
> We are meant to exercise our 'rule' only in union with God, as he acts with us. He
> intended to be our constant companion or co-worker in the creative enterprise of life
> on earth. That is what his love for us means in practical terms.[107]

Work is a means of livelihood for one's self and dependents but it's more—it carries

tremendous spiritual overtones. It often serves an invisible neighbor (or end-user of our

product) and is a good thing. Opportunities abound to serve people in other nations with

one's area of expertise—be it engineering, health care, teaching or carpentry. It's worth

asking how one's skills and work competencies can be used by God globally. The chief

end of work is not money-making, although it includes that. Work is primarily a means

of service and of self-giving, not merely a means of acquisition. We do not live by

bread—or money—alone.   To use Steve Garber's phrase, is our education a "passport to

privilege"[108] or an invitation to good stewardship? Was Israel's election for self-

absorption or service? Will our focus be on improving our standard of living or

improving the Kingdom of God through our influence? The eternal Lamb of God will

reign forever and He will be served/worshipped by His servants forever (Rev. 22:3).

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[105] Rowe, *Faith at Work*, 22.

[106] Ibid., 7.

[107] Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, 22.

[108] Steven Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief & Behavior During the University Years* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 69.

Work as Worship

In the garden of Eden, worship and work were not separate. Also, the Hebrew word used for work—*'abad*—will later be used to mean "worship."[109] But this will not be the only word used in the Old Testament to designate "worship"—others denote bowing down, etc.[110] Work can be worshipful and it's reasonable to conclude that the work of one's hands and minds is one's service to God. Our relationship to God is not separate from our work. We bring ourselves and our work to God as an offering; and this pleases God (see Rom. 12:1). Pleasure in work is founded on its divine commission, which confers dignity on work of every kind. There is an essential dignity found in going to work each day and doing a good job. One must not confine God to church buildings and a few charitable acts. Work is a spiritual part of the Christian life, and faith at work is bringing God to bear on every activity of our lives. All that we do is worthy of God's presence if only we will invite, seek and welcome God's presence. "To say that work is sacred is to say that our sweat, energy and effort can be important to God . . . If God is the author of our abilities, and if our abilities are offered to God, then all work is sacred."[111] Some theologians fear, however, that an emphasis on the sacredness of all activities (or the sacrament of living) can inadvertently lead to "gospel work being subsumed and secularized."[112] The chur ch certainly has a right to advance its interests in

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[109] This fuller explanation was alluded to earlier on the page 15 note.

[110] Vine, ed., *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, 224, 295-296. For example, *'abad* means to serve God or worship in Exod. 3:12, Deut. 6:13 and Ps. 100:2. But *sahah*, which denotes prostrating oneself, is a common term for coming before God in worship (e.g., 1 Sam. 15:25; Jer. 7:2).

[111] Rowe, *Faith at Work*, 13.

[112] Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 122n. Further, he adds that "it is questionable whether there is any significant biblical evidence that spiritual gifts are given for societal good rather than for building up the body of Christ." See also Gordon Fee and Paul Stevens, "Spiritual Gifts," in *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity,* pp. 943-9.

a world with different ones. I'd like to think that it's unnecessary to separate the

Creation/Cultural Mandate (social action) from the Great Commission

(discipleship/evangelism).[113]

Certainly the Bible gives the impression that everything we do should be done to

the glory of God. That's true for inanimate creation: the trees clap their hands (Isa.

55:12), the oceans lift their voices (Ps. 93:3), the mountains sing for joy (Ps. 98:8) and

the forests burst into song (Isa. 44:23). Surely, God's highest creation, humankind,

should join the worship chorus and one day will.[114] All of our efforts are meant to be

worshipful. It would be wonderful if our faith and work lives were indistinguishable

from one another, from the standpoint of attitude and conduct. "As a Christian, you are

to go to work for the same reason you go to church: to worship and serve Christ."[115]

Work as a Platform for Evangelism

One common understanding of work among evangelicals which doesn't fully

encompass the biblical teaching on the subject is that work exists solely (or primarily) for

evangelism. Under this approach, work has instrumental value only for relationship

contacts; essentially, you redefine your job description. "You are no longer a doctor, a

teacher or a salesperson. Rather, you become an evangelist in the field of medicine,

education or marketing."[116]

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[113] Evangelism and social responsibility are both essential to mission and it seems unnecessary to determine which comes first in any given situation before we see the needs themselves.

[114] Jesus will be worshipped by His children forever (Rev. 22:3; 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Phil. 2:9-11); therefore, a gratitude for work coupled with a growing appreciation for the infinite God stands as a posture that matches the destiny of believers.

[115] Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God*, 122.

[116] Ibid., 65.

I agree that Christians need to be challenged to become more fluent in articulating their faith (i.e., evangelism) as part of committed discipleship. Work is a natural place to discuss a number of issues, including a person's spiritual condition; in fact, the workplace has become the "new neighborhood" where most non-family relationships occur.[117] Many co-workers are open to talking about spiritual things and it's biblical to assume that they truly need God even if they seem to be looking in every other place. Christians cannot allow godly engagement with the world to slip into mere humanistic social activism without any God-component. As circumstances permit, and in an appropriate manner,

> we should be watchful and prepared to meet any obvious spiritual need or interest in understanding Jesus with words that are truly loving, thoughtful and helpful. It is not true, I think, that we fulfill our obligations to those around us by only living the gospel . . . you cannot assume that people understand what is going on when you only live in their midst as Jesus' person.[118]

It's unlikely the world can be successfully reached by full-time financially-supported pastors/ministers/missionaries. Obviously, God intended a more encompassing concept of ministry and service, of which bearing witness (i.e., verbally sharing the good news of Christ) is a part. We must do more than speak in a Christian manner; we must speak explicitly as Christians who see Jesus as the solution. Evangelism is given a high priority in Scripture and every believer is expected to participate in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, "evangelism is not an end goal of workplace ministry; it is

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[117] "Co-workers have become the new family, the tribe, the social world. 'We have become almost citizens of our companies.' . . ." (Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1999), 391. The workplace serves as the center of community, often more so than family and church ties.

[118] Willard, "How to Be a Disciple," 432.

the fruit."[119] In other words, the goal is to glorify God and experience the fullness of God

in all aspects of our work life (see Col. 1:16-17), and evangelism may well be part of it.

But it's when evangelism is viewed as the only valuable component of work that one

often inadvertently undercuts his/her witness, justifies laxity and may even be an excuse

for not living with ethical distinction. God cares about much more than only ostensible

prayer, overt evangelism and simply not getting into trouble or questionable behavior at

work. A Christian's laudable desire to talk about Christ must be matched with his

nonverbal conduct, but at some point he can tell what he knows and believes to be the

ultimate truth.

I think that many in my evangelical circles tend to fear that any emphasis on "all

work is sacred" will undermine evangelism. In other words, if work is exalted to the

sacred level then God will lose out.[120] That is, by widening the scope, we will lose focus.

Given the nature of the spiritual battle that seems to accompany evangelistic efforts and

intercessory prayer, I'm sympathetic to these genuine concerns. Also, I'm convinced

scripturally that evangelism (i.e., proclamation) is important, but so is the scriptural

teaching on work.   I simply do not think that an expanded emphasis on what qualifies as

God's work in the world must necessarily produce less urgency and effectiveness about

evangelism; in fact, it may be just the opposite.[121] Work may be the only place many

people will ever be exposed to Christians; therefore, it's a strategic arena for Christian

thinking and influence and witness. When bluntly asked, is "time spent not working in

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[119] Hillman, *Faith @ Work*, 37.

[120] Granted, whether this position has been thought out or not (i.e., unconsciously absorbed), the underlying assumption means that the only thing God really cares about is overt evangelism.

[121] Elton Trueblood suggests that clergy may be at a disadvantage when it comes to sharing the message of Christ with many persons. *(Your Other Vocation,* pp. 40-41)

evangelism or other 'spiritual activities' actually wasted?",[122] I think it's important to be

able to say "No," and offer reasons, while also upholding the value of evangelism. As I

have concluded in this chapter, work is a big deal to God, there's no biblical division

between the sacred and secular realms, and all wholesome work is a service to God, even

worshipful.

> I see no evidence from the Bible or my Christian experience that working in a
> business is any more or less significant to God than becoming involved in the
> voluntary, church-related or not-for-profit activities that many Christians now think
> are more worthy of their talents and time. My reading of Scripture indicates that
> nearly every kind of work is significant, if it is consistent with the person's calling
> and the person is working to glorify and worship God.[123]

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[122] Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 21.

[123] Bakke, *Joy at Work*, 255.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis project resides at the intersection of young adult development theories (i.e., sociology, education) and workplace theology (i.e., biblical exegesis, Faith at Work movement, corporate "spirituality" emphasis) and standard first job adjustments (human resources, corporate training). As such, it requires synthesizing interdisciplinary findings. This chapter presents an overview of the theories, books and authors most relevant to my emphasis on preparing collegiate seniors for their first workplace.

Young Adulthood and the University: A Strategic Developmental Phase

Young adulthood is a distinct developmental stage, and the collegiate experience is a major component within it (for those who attend). The university serves as a primary rite of passage toward adulthood (and ultimately to adult workplaces). Sharon Parks, an influential professor and researcher in the field of social psychology at Harvard, describes it in this way, "Although there are other contexts for young adult formation, . . . it may be said that higher education is the institution of preference for the formation of young adults in our culture."[124]   Steven Garber, faculty member and campus minister, agrees:

> In the modern world, the years between eighteen and twenty-five are a time for the settling of one's convictions about meaning and morality: Why do I get up in the morning? What do I do after I get up in the morning? One then settles into life with those convictions as the shaping presuppositions and principles of one's life. . . . The time span of these critical years has varied over the centuries. . . . But the movement from childhood to adulthood has been worthy of every culture's greatest attention and perhaps its finest education. . . . There has been a long history of understanding that

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[124] Sharon Daloz Parks, *The Critical Years: Young Adults and the Search for Meaning, Faith and Commitment* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 133.

there are in fact certain critical years in human life and learning, they are years of deciding how one will make sense of life over the course of life.[125]

The debate about the nature and content of education dates back to early civilizations and current scholars continue to write about what happens and what should happen while a student is at the university.[126] It's instructive to review pertinent ideas and recent theories and their historical antecedents, as they pertain to this thesis project. Campus ministers benefit from understanding the nature of higher education and how it functions within our society.

Sharon Parks has labeled those years between adolescence and adulthood as the "critical years" in human development, where basic beliefs about life and the world are settled as one begins to live in the adult world. Her research emerges from a line of scholars who have studied and tried to integrate the fields of psychology, theology, philosophy, sociology, and theories of personal development. Erik Erikson, past professor of human development at Harvard, identified the role of "crises" in the stages of the life cycle. For Erikson, a crisis occurs at any "crucial period in which a decisive

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[125] Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, 81.

[126] Ibid., 82. Garber provides an extensive list on p. 186. Those in the last century I consulted include Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (New York: New American Library, 1929), C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), and William Buckley, *God and Man at Yale* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1951). Several of the better ones from recent decades I read include John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), Charles Habib Malik, *A Christian Critique of the University* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1982), William Bennett, *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Humanities, November 1984), Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), George Marsden, *The Soul of the University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), Arthur W. Chickering & Jon C. Dalton & Liesa Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), and Russell K. Nieli, *From Christian Gentleman to Bewildered Seeker: The Transformation of American Higher Education* (Raleigh, NC: John William Pope Center for Higher Education Policy, 2007).

turn one way or another is unavoidable."[127]   Erikson influenced a generation of scholars

like Lawrence Kohlberg, who developed a theory of moral development within a life

cycle, and James Fowler, who presented a theory of faith development, in which he

understands human development by focusing on the formation of faith. Fowler

hypothesized six stages of faith development,[128] and his influential theory generated

many appraisals and reactions, including alternate theories, as other theorists examined

his assumptions and implications. For example, Parks posited a new stage particular to

young adults, situated between stage three and stage four of Fowler's work, which is

marked by probing commitment, fragile self-dependence, and ideologically compatible

communities.[129] She acknowledged that "developmental theorists do not agree about

when 'adolescence' ends and 'adulthood' begins,"[130] a discrepancy which "reflects our

growing awareness that the process of human growth and maturity is not tied exclusively

to chronological age or to biological maturation."[131]

     This thesis project is not concerned with exact definitions of "adolescence" (or

"youth") or "young adult," or the precise characterizations at the edges of these

transitions (e.g., the age of 18 or 21, leaving home, becoming financially independent,

level of self-understanding or moral engagement, when one chooses work over play, or

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[127] Erik Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility: Lectures on the Ethical Implications of Psychoanalytical Insight* (New York: WW Norton, 1964), 139.

[128] James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981). He expanded on his paradigm in James Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984). The stages of most interest to this paper are stage 3—the "Synthetic-Conventional" faith (a conventionally assumed faith when one begins to step outside one's own experiences and see more)—and stage 4—the "Individuating-Reflective" faith (a critically appropriated adult faith when one encounters certain unavoidable tensions between competing values and possible life choices).

[129] Parks, *The Critical Years*. Appendix B in her book provides a good overview of her proposed stage.

[130] Ibid., 4.

[131] Ibid., 6.

communal commitments over self-interest, etc.), but the work of scholars in this field

reveals that the overall sweep of young adult developmental theory is worth studying and

understanding, especially its psychosocial and intellectual and spiritual components.

Young adulthood doesn't end or begin with acceptance to college, nor does it end with

the granting of a college degree, but these are significant moments in young adulthood.

Overall, these scholars confirm that young adulthood is a time of unusual promise, where

dreams are birthed and initial visions are formed; it's also a time of vulnerability, where

it's easy to become disconnected or cynical.[132] "[The exposure to the] many ways there

are of seeing and being in the world often leads to a kind of 'vertigo of relativity.' . . . A

kind of skepticism develops when one encounters one system of meaning after another

and they all seem plausible. It is the very plausibility of them all that seems to undermine

each in turn."[133]

Daniel Levinson calls it "novice adulthood" and sees it as the time when persons

form their first adult structures and "settle down" to what is going to be important for

them.[134] Kenneth Keniston differentiates "young adults" from "youth" by describing the

former as "apprentices to the existing society."[135] Current scholars like Jeffrey Arnett, a

professor at the University of Maryland, argue that "emerging adulthood" is the most

appropriate label for this new in-between stage of life.[136]

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[132] Ibid., 96ff.

[133] Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks, ed., *Faith Development and Fowler* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1986), 4.

[134] Daniel Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (New York: Knopf, 1978), 139-165.

[135] Kenneth Keniston, *Youth and Dissent: The Rise of a New Opposition* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960), 17-18.

[136] Jeffrey Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004). Drawing on over 300 interviews, Arnett suggests that the unique characteristics of this phase include intense: (1) identity exploration, (2) instability, (3) focus on

These authors are not interested in providing an evangelical description of human development or a Christocentric prescription for faith formation. For instance, Fowler's concept of faith is so broad as to include almost anything human, and Parks defines faith as "the activity of meaning making,"[137] which supposedly encompasses all spiritual world views. These developmental theories talk about the structure of faith and not its content; thus, the concept of faith described has no definite content. I'm interested in faith—albeit a holistic faith—but faith within the distinctively Christian tradition and worldview, and I think that "discovering meaning" more accurately gets at the reality of life in God's world than Parks' image of "meaning-making."[138] Furthermore, some Christian scholars raise valid concerns about developmental theorists who rely too much on the fundamental goodness of humanity—namely, that what comes naturally is progress instead of an unblinking commitment to the fallenness of humanity wherein some human tendencies must be stifled.[139] Another theologian, James Loder, insists that stages of development are illuminating with regard to the capacity of a human to construct meaning, "but they are not stages of faith in any biblical or theological sense."[140] In other words, Fowler

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self, (4) feeling in transition (in limbo), and (5) sense of possibilities and opportunities. For his most recent work expanding on these characteristics, see Jeffrey Arnett and Jennifer Tanner, ed., *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006). In a sobering assessment, Jean Twenge suggests that the unprecedented freedoms and resources of young adults, coupled with the delay of marriage and a desire to maximize options and postpone commitments, may simply foster self-indulgence rather than helpful preparation for real adulthood. For instance, postponing marriage until all degrees are earned, and identity and career issues are settled, normalizes sexual experimentation and encourages co-habitation. See Jean Twenge, *Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled–and More Miserable Than Ever Before* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2006).

[137] Parks, *The Critical Years*, 14-17.

[138] Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, 187.

[139] Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, *Educating for Responsible Action* (Grand Rapids, MI: CSI Publications and Eerdmans, 1980), 29.

[140] James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 255. This past professor at Princeton Theological Seminary

concentrates on the human aspect of faith (i.e., expansion of competencies), but he does not consider the God-side of faith (i.e., the source and substance of faith beyond the human capacity to construct meaning). The purposes of God must be considered beyond simply human fulfillment or maximization; moreover, the grace of God in Jesus Christ transforms the human person by the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, making us into the image of Christ. Something new and super-natural begins.

I must, therefore, provide a biblical framework of transformation—being and becoming as the process and goal in the Kingdom of God—as we approach this topic of work for soon-to-be-graduates. They need to be informed about how work fits into God's economy and revelation, and how work may become a place of sanctification for them in the years ahead. I want them to base their values, motivation and goals regarding their job on what God has revealed in Scripture. The Bible must serve as the standard of evaluation for the emerging Christian leader.[141] In emphasizing the importance of God-centeredness in education, scholar Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., says, "One way to love God is to know and love God's work. Learning is, therefore, a *spiritual* calling: properly done, it attaches us to God. In addition, the learned person has, so to speak, more to be Christian *with*."[142] Collegians need to consider how being a member of the kingdom of God affects who they will become as a worker and what the process of Christian transformation might look like and have as its goal. I want to guide them to be ready to assume their places in God's kingdom after college.

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claims that the essence of biblical faith resides in the divine-human relationship, not in the developing competencies of the ego (p. 267).

[141] J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 181.

[142] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, xi (emphasis his).

It has been suggested that academics merely test in theory what already works in practice! But often things aren't working that well, so disciplined academic inquiry can lead to better understanding and solutions. These influential sociologists and scholars pinpoint many of the key developmental tasks and shifting realities for young adults. In 2000, when Sharon Parks began to re-write her acclaimed 1986 work, *The Critical Years: The Young Adult Search for a Faith to Live By*, she decided that an altogether new work was necessary because "critical shifts have taken place that call forth deepening understanding of the anxieties and aspirations of young adults"[143] as they construct their lives. Among these critical shifts in North American culture, she mentions the economy, the extension of the life span, the technology/communications explosion and the rise of religious pluralism. She argues that today's young people are exposed to more and more information in ever-increasing ways, but she is troubled that they "are not being encouraged to ask the big questions that awaken critical thought in the first place"; hence, her later book is titled, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (2000). She sees a deficiency of mentors for these information-rich and expectation-laden young adults that must be overcome. She concludes her book with a vision for how mentoring communities might function in various spheres of life. This thesis project focuses on the intersection of two of those spheres, higher education and the workplace, specifically the last year (or two) of higher education (namely undergraduate) and one's initial workplace experience because "a central task of young adulthood is finding a place in the world of adult work."[144] And

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[143] Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), xi-xii.

[144] Ibid., 182.

even though technology and globalization continue to reshape the university experience, its formative nature remains. Parks contends that "Every professor is potentially a spiritual guide and every syllabus a confession of faith."[145] This project suggests that a campus minister can become this type of mentor for a collegian's forthcoming first work experience—a Christian guide who provides a preparatory curriculum. Those young adult years remain "that unique period of time between adolescence and adulthood when choices about meaning and morality—what one believes to be real and true and right—are being made (choices which, more often than not, last for the rest of life)."[146] "The young adult conscience is ripe for orientation and ongoing formation."[147] The college years are developmentally critical for a healthy and successful adulthood. For Christians, higher education involves developing our God-given minds, establishing patterns of godly living, and deepening our wisdom about the world in order to serve God more fully.

Another resource that gives insights into today's teen culture is provided by Chap Clark, professor of youth and family and culture at Fuller Seminary. His book, *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers,* is based on sociological research and deals with the spiritual development of teens. Clark cautions us against assuming that we understand what teenagers are experiencing just because we once were teenagers. He contends that the developmental stage traditionally termed "adolescence" has been

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[145] Ibid., 159, 165. Similarly, *Los Angeles Times* editor David Savage observed, "Most students enter college expecting that the university and its leaders have a clear vision of what is worth knowing and what is important in our heritage that all educated persons should know. They also have a right to expect that the university sees itself as more than a catalogue of courses." (cited in Nieli, *From Christian Gentleman to Bewildered Seeker*, 23. Their failure to do so is the basis of Nieli's 2007 critique.

[146] Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, 18. Elsewhere Garber asserts that "Learning to make sense of life, for life, is what the years between adolescence and adulthood are all about." (p. 175)

[147] Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 174.

extended significantly or delayed for today's young people as a result of society

systematically abandoning today's youth to navigate unprecedented change on their own.

Among other factors, he traces this abdication to the turmoil of the 1960s for parents, the

reduced authority given educators and the realities produced by an industrialized and

global world. This research-based book suggests that the four tasks of individuation

faced by teenagers, which concerned adults must address are:

1. Who am I? — quest for identity

2. Where am I going with my life? — quest for autonomy and/or purpose

3. How do I—or should I—relate to other people? — question of intimacy

4. How do I know these things? and how can I know that I know? — question of epistemology.[148]

For those familiar with young adult developmental theories, these are not groundbreaking

discoveries, but Clark provides superb social and cultural analysis of this moment in

history for young adults and how we got here. Moreover, these teenagers, or extended

adolescents, will be collegians soon, if not already.

College as a "Teachable Moment" for One's First Workplace

Faith is formed by observing, questioning, examining, encountering others who

think differently and making choices. It is spurred along by periodic jolts and jumps

when a heightened sense of focus and pursuit occurs. In a general sense, college (and

even young adulthood) could be considered one of those times, but the first semester of

the freshman year and the senior year definitely qualify. Seniors are completing

applications and undergoing a bevy of interviews, thus making vocational choices in

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[148] Chap Clark, *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004).

college which determine their initial workplace. College becomes a "teachable moment" regarding workplace issues.

The concept of the "teachable moment" was popularized by Professor Robert Havighurst and defined as: "sensitive periods or critical periods when a human being is especially able to learn quickly through certain types of experiences. . . . Efforts at teaching which would have been largely wasted if they had come earlier, give gratifying results when they come at the teachable moment, when the task should be learned."[149] For example, there are optimal times to teach reading, learn languages, and adjust to retirement from one's job. This idea of "teachable moments" or accelerated learning or heightened receptivity has resonated with students and educators and campus ministers, especially when one's "inherited faith" has been challenged or an individual is expected to take a stand or execute a task which he or she never has before. One pastor, when reflecting on his own spiritual journey, observed:

> In essence, the teachable moment is that time in life when events converge that make us want to learn—indeed, enable us to learn—certain things we were unwilling or incapable of learning previously. . . . In a sense, the teachable moment comes when our fields are plowed, when the hard dirt is turned up and the soft soil exposed, and when we are vulnerable and receptive to new knowledge and perspectives pertaining to Christianity.[150]

Sometimes collegians are pushed into these "teachable moments" by a challenging professor, international travel, an internship or a personal failure; other times they seem drawn into them by an innate hunger for growth or expansion. Graduation from college—and its looming presence beforehand—is one of those "teachable times."

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[149] Robert J. Havighurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education*, 3rd ed. (New York: David McKay, 1974), 6-7.

[150] Scott Walker, *Where the Rivers Flow: Exploring the Sources of Faith Development* (Waco: Word Books, 1986), 151-152.

Figuring out one's initiation into work becomes important. Transformation can occur.

The convergence of external situations which results in teachable moments has much to

do with faith development. Without these moments of receptivity, faith might never

grow or mature. The onset of job interviews in the fall of the senior year, coupled with

the shrinking amount of time until graduation, provide an impetus to consider the next

step of adult work.

The Nature of Transformation

James E. Loder, former professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, has

described five steps in the process of transformation (or knowing) which produce

personal convictions and a congruent way of life:

> 1. Conscious conflict – moment of disequilibrium initiates it, become aware that something is not fitting, baffling struggle or tension, must clarify nature of conflict, must care about resolving it in order to reach a new level of knowing or you remain essentially unchanged;
>
> 2. Pause (or interlude for scanning) – temporarily baffled but drawn into the process of searching out possible solutions, relaxed concentration, put conflict out of conscious mind (i.e., put it on back burner for awhile, sleep on it);
>
> 3. Image (or insight) – moment of insight or revelation (i.e., "ah-ha!"), capable of simplifying and unifying;
>
> 4. Repatterning and release of energy – new awareness or openness or faith, make connections and a conclusion is reached, freed from the engrossing tension;
>
> 5. Interpretation – works in real life, public confirmation (others concur), sense of congruence.[151]

Although the technical terms differ, many different disciplines acknowledge this

phenomenon of growth sparked by mental turbulence. To put it in terms of leadership

and management theory, without some distress, there is no incentive to change anything;

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[151] James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard Publishers, Inc., 1989), 37-40.

hence leaders are supposed to "orchestrate the conflict" which accompanies change so that it's a productive range of distress or a "constructive friction."[152] Educational psychology suggests that "cognitive dissonance" propels intellectual growth, whereas sociology refers to a phase of "liminality" before mature entry occurs. On a more personal level, educator and author Parker Palmer observes, "The insight we receive on the inner journey is that "chaos is the precondition to creativity"[153] on one's inner journey. Without a compelling reason to change, persons tend to stay just as they are. It seems accurate that we only learn what we care about or are bothered about, and when we wrestle through major/real issues, a new sense of reality unfolds. The Christian, whose "inner person" interacts with the Holy Spirit (e.g., 1 Cor. 2:6-16), becomes renewed in Jesus' life, as well as sharpened in his/her thinking about what it means for God to be in our midst and lead us into new situations. The ultimate reality is the presence of God in Jesus Christ at work restoring alienated creatures to their Creator, and one aspect of that restoration involves living for God through our work.

Using Loder's model of transformation, a campus minister can help students with the aforementioned phases that include: (1) conscious conflict, (2) pause, (3) insight, and (4) reimagining, but we cannot be there for (5) implementation regarding their first workplace. Nevertheless, even Christian educators who insist that one cannot fast-track or short-circuit maturity admit that clearly some strategies work better than others and

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[152] Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 108.

[153] Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 89.

that not every lesson has to be learned the hard way.[154] The coming jolt or pressure from

the first workplace highlights the necessity for instilling foundational principles during

this formative stage of the senior year.

Campus ministers appreciate the messy, developmental, nonlinear aspect of

young adult spiritual formation, and they enjoy coming alongside students in this process

of discovery, realizing that there likely will be periodic regressions and vacillations.

People expect those in authority to "provide them with the right answers, not to confront

them with disturbing questions and difficult choices. . . . Generally, people will not

authorize someone to make them face what they do not want to face. . . . But adaptive

work . . . requires disturbing people—but at a rate they can absorb."[155] The forthcoming

workplace will soon require this kind of "adaptive work" from graduating students.

Herein lies the challenge and possibility as a campus minister addresses workplace

realities. Collegians are not quite there yet, but they can learn what a trusted authority

chooses to emphasize.

The Greek word for "transformation" (lit. *metamorphoo*) is used only a few times

in the New Testament, and it is rooted in the constant biblical assertion of the reality of

"Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Biblically, we are transformed by the

"renewal of our minds" (Rom. 12:2) and by "beholding the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor.

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[154] Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*. He argues that "in terms of learning motivation, sensed relevancy, and immediate application of skills and knowledge learned, by far the most efficient is the interrupted in-service." (p. 226) Sherman & Hendricks argue for church-sponsored small groups in the workplace, if at all possible: "A greater transfer of learning takes place when the learning environment closely resembles the environment of application" *(Your Work Matters,* p. 235). But Clinton's plea for on-the-job training and continuing education as optimal (once in the workplace) is tempered by his suggestion that reading widely, learning from others, and a capacity to apply lessons to their own lives from their reading and observation "often short-circuits the years it would have taken to learn the same lessons by personal experience" *(The Making of a Leader,* p.141).

[155] Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*, 20.

3:18). While we don't want to be conformed to the patterns of this world (Rom. 12:1),

though, we do want and expect to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ (Rom.

8:29) as a result of God's transformative work in our lives (see Phil. 1:6).

Jesus took advantage of special moments when they presented themselves as

pressing needs (e.g., feeding of 5000 in John 6 and calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41),

special experiences (e.g., Matt. of Transfiguration in Matt. 17:1-11, and his Upper Room

discourse in John 14-17), or opportune times (e.g., responding to Thomas in John 21;

talking with disciples on the Emmaus road in Luke 24) which allowed Him to stretch His

disciples' faith and understanding in ways they could handle. Moreover, some events

didn't make sense to them until later (e.g., cleansing temple—"After he was raised . . . his

disciples recalled what he had said."—John 2:22). Also, He didn't try to cover every

possible topic and contingency (e.g., "I have much more to say to you, more than you can

now bear."—John 16:12) but He gave them the important core ideas and topics that

would sustain them later when their circumstances changed and they could rely on the

Holy Spirit. Jesus capitalized on "teachable moments." He made statements to his

disciples like, "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you

will believe that I am He [God]," (John 13:19) and "I have told you this, so that when the

time comes you will remember that I warned you" (John 16:13). In a markedly

derivative sense, that's what I'm attempting with young workers. While it is admittedly

impossible to prepare students completely for the workplace transition, there are steps

that can be taken to help students transition more smoothly.

What Employers and Human Resource Specialists Say

There are many books that address general life adjustments after college, such as choosing a roommate, where to live, managing money, setting priorities, having a social life, etc.. These are important issues, a few of which I address in my training curriculum, but there are decidedly few books which specifically address the adjustments within one's first job (i.e., the tasks and attitudes that comprise the job description which the person is being paid to perform). My primary focus is one's workplace rather than all the surrounding issues beyond the workplace. The best and most applicable resource I found from an experienced Human Resource (HR) manager is *Leaving Campus and Going to Work* by T. Jason Smith. It is specifically written to make a campus hire's transition to the working world easier. He targets students coming straight from campus to their first full-time job and who may know little about the real world of work. He opines that "the first year of your first job is the best time to become more self-aware of your behavior and compare it to what does or does not work in the work environment."[156] As opposed to specific skills, he focuses on behaviors—defined as "instinctive reactions to the things that happen to you or because of the environment around you"[157]—which will help solidify one's career. He also warns against behaviors that must be unlearned in order to succeed. For instance, he offers practical guidance about how to handle various situations such as dealing with the element of the unknown in making decisions, finding a historical coach and developing a "working eye" (i.e., understanding company culture

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[156] T. Jason Smith, *Leaving Campus and Going to Work* (Sugar Hill, GA: Aspen Mountain Publishing, 2006), 6.

[157] Ibid., 5.

and fitting within it), and the first-year emotional curve.[158] He shares hard-earned life

lessons for young workers and utilizes examples from their lives. While never explicitly

religious or Christian, his advice coincides with a Christian perspective on work issues.

I did not find any writers from the human resource field who did not acknowledge

that the first workplace experience is unique; however, some write about it in a whimsical

manner. They present their insights in an entertaining way so that new workers will

actually read them. One notable example is Michael Ball's *You're Too Smart for This,*

which is a light-hearted, hip, irreverent insider's look at the first workplace. He observes

that "career freshmen remain a commodity" who do "unrelenting gruntwork" amid

"suffocating monotony" for "incompetent managers and systems," and they are "on the

wrong side of the equation."[159] He advocates for "the importance of consciousness,"

"seeing yourself as a charity case," and the ability to use current buzzwords with

aplomb.[160] His insights were largely common sense but his style reminded me of the

importance of keeping the attention of young workers who are often short-sighted and

"pathologically narcissistic." I don't share his overtly cynical view of work, nor do I

think that mere survival matches the Christian ideal, but his unorthodox approach is

aimed at helping those who are "well on your way toward . . . realizing your true

potential for dissatisfaction . . . in a place you don't really want to be."[161]

Similarly, Hannah Seligson provides a recent, firsthand perspective of a young

female worker who graduated from a top university and landed a great job but was

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[158]Ibid., 111, 145-148, 157ff., 105, respectively.

[159] Michael Ball, *You're Too Smart for This: Beating the 100 Big Lies About Your First Job* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2006), 31 & 118, 127ff., 117, 146, and 141, respectively.

[160] Ibid., 124, 159.

[161] Ibid., 3,5.

abruptly fired after nine months. Her disorienting experience led her to seek advice from successful professional women. She shares what she learned in her book, *New Girl on the Job: Advice from the Trenches,* which provides tips, anecdotes, and resources for young women trying to navigate the working world, primarily the corporate world. She advises about this work "culture shock" and suggests ways to decode the social mores of the workplace. For instance, err toward the formal (i.e., avoid nicknames and text-message lingo, and don't wear anything that could possibly be worn to do yard work!), don't use the word "feel" interchangeably with "think," don't blurt out a procedure-related question in the middle of a meeting, and don't ask your employer a question you could easily have looked up.[162] There's not an obvious spiritual viewpoint advanced but it provides a readable, gender-sensitive primer. Again, like Ball, her down-to-earth writing style shows that employers value youthful energy—but sophomoric antics, not so much.

The most helpful and pertinent resource from the perspective of a professor who bridges the world of academia and business is *10 Things Employers Want You to Learn in College* by Bill Coplin, the director and a professor of the public affairs program at Syracuse University. Coplin has developed skill-based liberal arts curricula for more than 30 years and agrees that a student can (and should) learn at college the key skills that will make for a successful life in one's subsequent workplace, but it's far from automatic. Collegians don't have to be surprised by everything when they arrive at their first job, although he concedes that too many are. He acknowledges that one's GPA and test scores are helpful indicators of some of these skills—they show that you know how a

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[162] Hannah Seligson, *New Girl on the Job: Advice from the Trenches* (New York: Citadel Press, 2007).

system works and can anticipate and meet the requisite standards—but they are far from

sufficient or even the most important things employers are looking for. He identifies ten

skill sets, which he calls "know-how groups." These 10 "know-how groups" include

character development at college as well as topics like one's work ethic, people skills,

gathering information, and problem-solving capacities. For instance, with regard to

honesty, he insists that "if you can avoid the temptation of cheating in college, you are

likely to avoid it in your work. If you cannot resist the pressure of dishonoring yourself

in order to move from a B to an A, how can you avoid shredding documents in order to

preserve your job or get a raise when you have a family to help support?"[163]

His book serves as a helpful bridge between what will be needed in the post-

collegiate workplace and how a student can develop those same skills at college. He

concludes each "know-how group" with practical suggestions on how to build that

particular skill into a student's life through both course work (i.e., curricular) and non-

course activity (i.e., non-curricular), in addition to a "minimum skill level by graduation."

"It is not that colleges don't provide opportunities for students to develop problem

solving . . . and verbal communication skills. Rather, most college students do not know

how to take advantage of those opportunities."[164] It behooves a student to learn these

lessons now rather than wish for some kind of miraculous infusion of character once one

graduates. This project operates with the same premise, namely that a Christian student's

view of work shapes how they perform it once they graduate. His lone reference to Jesus

(and Scripture) highlights Jesus' exemplary "focus in the world of chaos where

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[163] Bill Coplin, *10 Things Employers Want You to Learn in College: The Know-How You Need to Succeed* (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2003), 14.

[164] Ibid., 4.

meaninglessness can overpower the meaningful."[165]   For Coplin, college is an

indisputably vital "teachable moment" regarding workplace issues, and not just for

graduating seniors.

Another noteworthy resource is a helpful workbook by Elwood Holton III and

Sharon Naquin entitled, *How to Succeed in Your First Job: Tips for New College

Graduates*. The useful 86-page manual is based on 15 years of research and field testing

and is offered to collegians through the career counseling office at Louisiana State

University. These human resource experts assert that "the first year of a new job is a

separate and distinct career stage."[166] While it's never too late to learn, "the simple fact

is that it can take years to recover from a poor start."[167] "Everything you do early on will

be magnified in its impact . . . because you have no track record, so the impressions and

perceptions others have of you really count."[168] Their advice is predicated upon the

pragmatic value of learning how to succeed—"you should evaluate everything you do as

to how it will look to people"[169]—without any mention of personal integrity or a desire to

please God. To these writers, it's all about getting on the "success spiral"[170] early, but

this insistence on conformity might present ethical problems for the committed Christian;

however, these authors persuasively try to subdue arrogance and self-promotion. They

insist that most poor transitions for new hires are in

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[165] Ibid., 73.

[166] Elwood F. Holton III and Sharon S. Naquin, *How to Succeed in Your First Job: Tips for New College Graduates* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2001), 3. There is also a related guide offering tips aimed at managers of new college graduates.

[167] Ibid., 5.

[168] Ibid., 26.

[169] Ibid., 27. Also see pp. 37, 40, 44 for similar admonitions.

[170] Ibid., 4, 24, 67.

the failure to recognize how much the educational culture has shaped their attitudes, expectations, behaviors, and overall view of the organizations for which they choose to work. . . . 80 to 90 percent of their work-related complaints are either caused by or greatly exacerbated by their failure to recognize and let go of their deeply ingrained college-learned attitudes, expectations, and behaviors.[171]

They give tools for new hires to learn from old-timers at a particular organization because "most learning that occurs during your first year on the job will require fundamentally different skills than you cultivated in college."[172] They repeatedly remind young hires that "it is your responsibility to make your transition from college to the workplace a success, not your employer's."[173] This resource applies to a broad range of careers.

Let's review what these HR specialists have to say about the transition between college and work. For Coplin, college is the ideal place to prepare for the workplace if a student is intentional about it. Holton & Naquin suggest that college realities exacerbate first job adjustments. Smith and Ball and Heligson note that some college behaviors need to be unlearned but each thinks the transition can go smoothly; conversely, Ball sees college as a paradise for which the later workplace fails to provide an adequate continuation (at least in his tongue-in-cheek style). College and then one's first workplace are two distinct aspects of a young adult's development which reside closely together in a young adult's timeline. They can be connected in a healthy way while at the same time retaining the distinctiveness of each. But even committed Christian faculty who have poured their lives into higher education sometimes wonder about its limitations: "Typically the world of higher education is not a place where ideas and

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[171] Ibid., 6-7. The accompanying comparison chart on p. 8 is revealing. Chapter 5, "Master Breaking In Skills," and Chapter 8, "Become a Good Follower," are the most helpful for the highly-motivated students with whom I work. Also, their "Quick-Start Learning Tools" in Chapter 16 are transferable to my goals in this project.

[172] Ibid., 57.

[173] Ibid., 53.

consequences are clearly connected, and so the 'reality of the world' has not yet been

faced in all its fallen fury. But it does come, every time and for everyone."[174]

The detached "ivory tower" really seems an enchanted "bubble." But rather than

merely inveigh against this privileged environment, these Christian professors also

paradoxically affirm its immediacy and value:

> Don't imagine that while you're in college you're in some kind of holding tank
> awaiting the great day when you'll emerge into the "real world." People will speak of
> college life to you in this way, saying things like, "Just wait till you get to the *real*
> world." Often what they mean is "just wait till you get out here where balancing
> work and leisure is nearly impossible and keeping up with debts is a real headache."
> If that's the "real world," then you're already in it. . . . But jobs, bills, and stress
> aren't necessarily the "real world" either, or at least not anything like the whole of it.
> To think in that way is to think small. . . . Someone who lives in the "real world"
> lives with an awareness of the *whole* world, because the *whole* world is part of the
> kingdom of God.[175]

Studenthood is a distinct kind of work and the boundary between it and "real work"

can be engaged profitably. Young adults are at such a promising yet precarious stage,

and those of us who work with them vacillate between being indisputably convinced that

it's the most strategic place to minister while simultaneously wondering if some of these

vital lessons can only be learned later when life demands it.[176] Henry Zylstra claims that

education "develops, disciplines and matures our humanity" so that we can do what's

needed.[177] In any event, I want to help collegians "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt.

6:33) during this formative stage. An action step that Os Hillman recommends for

church leaders is "teach a theology of work to your young people so they do not have to

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[174] Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, 15.

[175] Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, 139-140.

[176] I oscillate between the promise and limitations of young adults at college. At times, it seems like an
enchanted land of self-absorption; other times, it resembles a pressure cooker; but, more than anything, I've
decided that it's a place of strategic investment.

[177] Henry Zylstra quoted in Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*, xi note.

relearn God's view of work."[178]   Nearly every commencement speaker suggests that

graduation is really a new beginning (i.e., a "commencing"). I agree but I want to add

that it's hard to get off to a good start in the world of work without anticipating this

transition before they "matriculate" into it.

Models for Understanding Faith at Work Amid the Pluralism and Religious Diversity in Contemporary Workplaces

According to Douglas Hicks, professor of leadership studies and religion at the

University of Richmond, the circumstances of the contemporary workplace include:

1. A broad and increasing religious diversity among employees within
organizations—beliefs, traditions, practices, dress, speech.

2. Non-compartmentalization—employees bring their own identity, problems
and beliefs to work—it's impossible to keep the workplace free of personal
commitments; religious or spiritual beliefs and practices are an essential, inseparable
part of one's identity.

3. Workplaces as increasingly public sites in American society—corporations
hold tremendous sway over employees and play a significant public role wherein
people encounter religious and other forms of difference.

4. The complex and contested role of religion in public life—avowed
pluralism? Christian preference?

5. The for-profit nature of companies—not the principal religious site for
employees.[179]

It's hard to find a comprehensively adequate model to deal with the religious complexity

of modern workplaces, but several considerations emerge from recent books. All

persons, not only religious persons, bring the basic aspects of their identity to work.

"People do not, alas cannot, leave their beliefs at the workplace door."[180] "The soul is

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[178] Hillman, *Faith @ Work*, 104.

[179] Douglas Hicks, *Religion and the Workplace: Pluralism, Spirituality, Leadership* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 160-163.

[180] Ibid., 40.

not something one leaves at home. People want to have their souls acknowledged wherever they go, precisely because their souls accompany them everywhere."[181] Based on empirical analysis from surveys and interviews, scholars Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton claim that organizations which foster a "spiritual" environment have more productive, creative, loyal and adaptive (to change) employees than do companies that reject or neglect spirituality. Employees do not leave their souls at home—indeed, they cannot—yet few companies acknowledge the concepts of spirituality and soul, thereby undercutting employees sources of creativity and productivity. While compartmentalization has repercussions, and most people wish there were ways that their spirituality could be expressed in the workplace, most are hesitant to do so for various reasons (e.g., offending peers, being taken advantage of, etc.).[182]

The analysis and proposed framework from Mitroff and Denton depends upon a sharp divide between religion and spirituality in the workplace.[183] Religion is presented as formal, communal, organized, rigid, dogmatic, divisive, old and exclusive. Conversely, spirituality is informal, individual, fresh, original, tolerant, universal, and inclusive. This sharp dichotomy enables them to classify religion in the workplace as fully controversial and inappropriate; it's framed as the problem to be solved, and the solution is spirituality (i.e., a set of unifying and adaptive values assumed to be shared by all persons). This so-called spirituality that they construct is allegedly universally held, but I think it's neither universally held nor tenable, especially for monotheists. Observant

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[181] Ian I. Mitroff and Elizabeth A. Denton, *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America: A Hard Look at Spirituality, Religion and Values in the Workplace* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), xvi.

[182] Ibid., 44.

[183] Ibid., xvi, 23-25, 46, 48, 85, 120.

Muslims and Jews and evangelical Christians maintain that God is the "ultimate source of meaning and purpose," not some vague notion of spirituality, so I think that their central claim remains contested. And I'm not sure how they can insist on bringing one's whole person to work yet exclude any religiously-based part or religiously-formed expressions of that person. Surely, religious traditions can be "chosen" by individuals, and religious communities can be a source of healthy values. But Mitroff and Denton provide a research-based book that takes spirituality in the workplace seriously and strives to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their observed five "historically distinct and valid approaches to the goal of finding meaning and purpose through one's work."[184] Granted, the breadth of evangelical responses in real life far exceed the reactionary, confrontational one they include. Laura Nash, for example, presents a much wider range of faith-informed approaches in *Believers in Business*.[185] But Mitroff and Denton have aptly identified problems inherent in our modern workplace. Most people have strong spiritual beliefs yet few know how they can or should act on those beliefs at work. As they specify, "we cannot overemphasize that all of the models we have discussed are actively seeking a source of wisdom different from that of the traditional organization,"[186] where spiritual matters were deemed extraneous to the day-to-day demands of work. The religious commitments of employees find their way in to the

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[184] Ibid., 8. The five organizational models, each given a chapter, are: (1) religion-based, (2) evolutionary, (3) recovering, (4) socially responsible, and (5) values-based. They propose a 6th --a best practice organizational model which relies most heavily on #4 & #5.

[185] Laura Nash, *Believers in Business* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994). Nash looks at it from the perspective of the individual as worker, not from the standpoint of the company. She looks at evangelical CEOs and their attitudes toward relating their faith to work and delineates three categories of individual response: (1) generalist, (2) justifier, and (3) seeker as they navigate her seven recurring points of tension for "believers in business."

[186] Denton, *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*, 174.

workplace in one way or another, whether or not managers or scholars (or ministers!) acknowledge it.

Laura Nash and Scotty McLennan arrive at a similar solution in their book, *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday: The Challenge of Fusing Christian Values with Business Life*. While the thrust of their book is to help clergy and business persons overcome the chasm which separates them due to preconceptions and misunderstandings exacerbated by different styles and "languages," they propose a framework for thinking and talking about faith in the business arena. In short, they suggest using "foundational religion" to provide the "new terms of engagement."[187]   The levels of religious engagement they observe are:

    1. Espoused Religion—what you are told to believe, comes from a creed or connection to a larger religious culture (i.e., outside group or membership).

    2. Catalytic Religion—what you do, how it plays out personally and experientially, often most apparent when seen in contrast (to others and institutionalized creeds).

    3. Foundational Religion—what you really believe, comes from inside.[188]

Essentially, they argue for a generic spirituality (encapsulated in "foundational religion") and an evolving language. Nash and McLennan think that an "optional" factor distinguishes the Foundational from the Espoused, but it's debatable if their distinctions hold up. For instance, what if one believes something because the Bible believes it? or the Pope says it? And why are beliefs arrived at by individuals more appropriate than those arrived at by institutions? Furthermore, don't almost all persons uphold

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[187] McLennan, *Church on Sunday, Work on Monday*, 225.

[188] Ibid., 224-238.

commitments that have binding force on them and constrain their choices?[189] Their

appeal to nonspecific values leads to generalities which seem to deny the core of a

Christian's faith that s/he brings to work. How subtle must one be? Can Christians really

bring their faith to work? This model represents another appeal to an essentially secular

spirituality, an increasingly popular view. But it seems an inadequate understanding of

how the Christian faith intersects with the workplace and what it brings to workers.

Christian religious belief is based on an objective Spirit (i.e., grounded in

revelation as well as experience, Holy Spirit = 3rd person of the Trinity) while spirituality

seems much more subjective (individual, contextual) and transitory. Regarding the word

"spirituality," Bruce Hindmarsh, professor of spiritual theology at Regent College in

Vancouver, insists that "you could almost capitalize every use of it in the Pauline letters.

… spirituality is 'life in the Holy Spirit,' or life in Christ in the Holy Spirit."[190]

Furthermore, a person led by the Holy Spirit often follows the way of the cross (i.e.,

sacrifice, denial, others-centered), not the way of personal comfort, least resistance, and

immediate results.

A line of thought similar to Mitroff & Denton, as well as Nash & McLennan,

unfolds in a popular book among Christian collegians entitled *Blue Like Jazz*; as such, it

serves as a helpful parallel case study. The author, Donald Miller, is looking for

fulfillment outside the constricting bounds of traditional religious systems where there

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[189] Hicks, *Religion and the Workplace*, 99. Nash and McLennan suggest that today's so-called "spirituality" programs fall into the category of "catalytic religion"; however, that's how I categorize their solution of "foundational religion." In other words, their "foundational religion" functions as an internalized, personalized spirituality. I appreciate their commitment to listening and dialogue, but theologically, I'm not convinced that there's a basis for sustainable, society-affirming values which have no religious basis or attachment.

[190] Quoted in Patton Dodd, "A Better Storyteller," *Christianity Today*, June 2007, 33. Bruce Hindmarsh is also the author of *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative* (2005).

are "rules and laws and principles to judge each other against."[191] And he finds a more

loving, forgiving and healthy community in the company of his "liberal friends."[192] This

evolving, nonpolitical, Christian spirituality provides personal fulfillment and

independence for the author, but I think his suggestions are tenuous. For the Christian,

God is admittedly a loving Father who wants an intimate and satisfying personal

relationship with humans; however, God is much more than that—He's also creator,

revealer of truth and judge. As difficult and even unpopular as it may be, Christians

cannot shape their theology or view of God around their own feelings and preferred

lifestyle choices. Rather, the feelings and choices of Christians must be shaped by the

Bible and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Moreover, Jesus Christ often promises

hardship and persecution in addition to acceptance and comfort.

 The word "spirituality" has come to mean just about anything a person wants it to

mean; it's imprecise. It's private and personal and rarely places any more demands on an

individual than what s/he wants—in that sense it is almost a profession of self. It's

become a satisfying designer experience.[193] But a Christian's standard must be rooted in

Scripture and must include a testimony beyond self-expression. Moreover, what we

believe about God and humanity and work has consequences—social, political,

economic, and lifestyle. Acting in love may involve saying or doing something which

another might find unpleasant or offensive. But Miller's critique of an unyielding, rule-

based faith and stifling community seems valid; and his underlying premise that truth is

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[191] Donald Miller, *Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2003), 215.

[192] Ibid., 214, also 225.

[193] "Religious" comes from the Latin *religare* and means to bind oneself to a common life, morals and beliefs.

rooted in story and relationships more so than propositional truths and simplistic three-step formulas seems helpful. He fails to demonstrate even nominal biblical support for his ideas,[194] however, and it's impossible to eradicate the propositional component of truth claims.

Jesus never said the road of faith was easy, but He commanded His followers to take the narrow way. Feelings are important and God-given, but they should be a byproduct of real faith rather than a prerequisite for it. Every person has the obligation to form his or her conscience in light of God's truth. As one Princeton University senior, majoring in political theory, observed: "The Gospel is not served by being watered down, for the beauty of the truth of salvation through Christ cannot be understood unless in its full magnitude."[195] It's becoming increasingly important for collegians and young workers to find both the points of commonality and difference with the spirituality movement.

Douglas Hicks, the University of Richmond professor, offers another model in his book, *Religion in the Workplace: Pluralism, Spirituality, Leadership.* Since "the religious commitments of employees find their way in to the workplace in one way or another, . . . managers should create conditions under which employees are able to express their religion at work within certain moral constraints."[196] In other words, aspects of one's religious identity should be welcome at work but policies must respect employees of all backgrounds equally. Hicks strives for a framework where all workers

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[194] Miller, *Blue Like Jazz*. Other than an inverted reference to "love your neighbor as yourself" as an incentive for self-esteem on p. 231, Scripture is not quoted in his entire book.

[195] Brian Brown, "Ethics Upended," *Revisions: A Journal of Christian Perspective* III, no. 2 (2007): 27.

[196] Hicks, *Religion and the Workplace*, 2.

are free to express their genuine religious and spiritual convictions to a significant degree. In contrast to Nash & McLennan, and Mitroff & Denton, he rejects the "spiritual but not religious" distinction[197] as both problematic and unhelpful since it requires incoherently ambiguous definitions. Also, he suggests that generic spirituality has effectively become an alternative form of religious affiliation[198] and doesn't provide much practical help in determining what is acceptable and what is not regarding specific practices, such as dress. Diversity—both spiritual and religious—is a reality and there's no catch-all spirituality without a resultant reductionism or flagrant misrepresentation. Furthermore, there are many varied Christian perspectives on how individuals should be allowed to bring their faith to work. "Individuals vary not only in their spiritual, religious, or moral worldviews, but also in whether or not and to what extent they choose to express their convictions in the workplace. They also vary in how and how much they would like their co-workers, bosses, and subordinates to express theirs."[199]

Given the circumstances of the contemporary workplace (cited earlier on page 70), he recommends a model of "Respectful Pluralism" which allows employees to bring their own religions to work without a company sponsoring religion or spirituality. To the greatest extent, workplace organizations should allow employees to express their religious, spiritual, cultural, political, and other commitments at work (i.e., the guiding principle = the presumption of inclusion), subject to the limiting norms of (a) non-

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[197] Ibid., 2, 32.

[198] Ibid., 21, 35, 48-62.

[199] Ibid., 106.

coercion, (b) non-degradation, and (c) non-establishment, and in the consideration of the

reasonable demands of the for-profit enterprise.[200]

Hicks recommends religion *in* the workplace but not a religion *of* the workplace.

Also, he believes that workers can come to know and understand their differences, and if

they choose, learn from each other through encounters involving religious dress, objects,

symbols, and religiously-based ideas. He approves of religion as a topic of discussion at

work, even extending invitations to others, as long as there is no repeated pestering or

threatening. You're welcome to invite other workers as long as you're willing to accept

"no" for an answer. He seems intentionally unconcerned with the content of a worker's

faith—workers can be religious differently—in so doing, he better encompasses the many

ways to express one's faith at work, especially for monotheists in comparison to the

spirituality models.

Hicks does not claim that enacting Respectful Pluralism will make companies

more profitable, but he insists that the way in which beliefs are articulated and actions are

undertaken is morally important.[201] Christians have a duty to treat all people, regardless

of beliefs, with justice, love, understanding, kindness and patience. They are called to

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[200] Ibid., 173-175. Hicks draws upon the concepts of civil religion and established religion in the political sphere in order to draw a distinction between individual and institutional expressions. Freedom, equality, and toleration are highlighted, and coercion must be guarded against since companies are powerful institutions. This crucial distinction between the beliefs and practices of individual employees, on the one hand, and the rituals and ethos of the organization, on the other, underlie his solution. A company "does not endorse any particular religious or spiritual tradition but, rather, creates the space for individuals of various backgrounds to live out their own particular, deeply held, complex, and sometimes conflict-producing commitments in the workplace" (p. 110).

[201] Moreover, his cautions levied at Christians, who often enjoy preferential treatment in his estimation (e.g., conveyed in holiday calendar and vacation time), provide concrete points of discussion. Hicks argues against maintaining a sense of Christian privilege, and he opposes corporate chaplains. He takes into account the institutional power of large companies and the tremendous sway they often hold over employees. It may not be a fully coercive power like the state, but the forces of economic necessity and the high costs associated with quitting a job and finding another one are significant. For my purposes with graduating seniors who prefer Christianity, raising some of his concerns will help students consider the ramifications of their choices from their company's perspective in today's diverse and pluralistic society.

love them, which is more demanding than tolerating them. God created all persons, thereby guaranteeing their dignity and rights. Unfortunately, at their worst, believers have seen unbelievers as enemies who need to be punished, and there are many examples of religious violence and prejudice in human history.[202]

My context at a major, private, secular research university fits with Hicks' proposed framework of Respectful Pluralism. The enterprise of higher education depends upon pluralism, respect, and the free exchange of ideas—in this sense it's far from a "bubble" but rather a global marketplace of ideas. It has never been easy to tolerate views that you don't accept, but that's a commonplace occurrence in a university environment. Much like future co-workers, there's an obvious intermixing and stunning exposure to others who believe, behave, dress, vote, aspire and justify themselves differently. In this sense, the campus and the work a student does getting a college education approximates work later.

This literature review has critically engaged several disparate approaches to addressing religious diversity. Some secularists advocate keeping religion and spirituality out of the workplace altogether because it's inappropriate and hopelessly divisive. Others like Mitroff & Denton, and Nash & McLennan to a lesser extent, reduce diverse religious beliefs and practices to a so-called common spirituality. Hicks offers another organizational model which strives to accommodate religious diversity while

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[202] Hicks' reliance upon legal and political categories could easily disintegrate into a "politically correct" judicial quagmire where any differing opinion is portrayed as violating his limiting norm of non-degradation, but he suggests that it need not. There seem to be radically differing societal views of what qualifies as bothersome or intolerant or hostile or even being faithful. When does accommodation become compromise? And how can a large organization possibly accommodate every religious observance equally while fulfilling its legitimate goal of profitability? Hicks is clear that workplaces are not the principle religious sites for employees, but it could easily become an overwhelming scheduling hassle. Overall, his framework seems to require an unrealistic, in-depth understanding of law and precedents within American history.

arguing against a Christian workplace. In his theory, workers can practice their particularistic religious commitments in the workplace while upholding mutual respect toward their co-workers. And it's the substance of their actions—not their personal opinions or motivations—that matter most. Workers are free to explain their beliefs to their co-workers and how those beliefs affect the way they approach their work. Christians should be aware of how they are like everyone else and how they are not like everyone else, and then respond in a Christlike way. The good news of Jesus Christ can stand the test of competition (with other worldviews). And the integration of faith and work ought to be done in healthy, respectful, appropriate ways in our pluralistic setting.

Now I turn to a few models of work and faith which are distinctively Christian and marked by undiluted appeals to Scripture.

Explicitly Christian Models of Faith-Work

One Christian approach to understanding work-faith issues groups them around three central biblical texts and ideas:

1. Cultural Mandate (Gen. 1:26-31) – earth-keeping, creating civilizations => covers the human assignment (i.e., job description) given by God and is often referred to as "creation work."

2. Great Commandment (Matt. 22:36-40) – love God first and foremost, and this love naturally expresses love for neighbors (i.e., service in the world).

3. Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) – proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and making disciples => captures a new dimension of redemptive work, sometimes referred to as "gospel work" or the New Creation Mandate.

The advantage of this model lies in both its simplicity and its ability to capture key moments in the progressive revelation of God to humanity. This model, in one form or another, seems present in most treatments on the biblical doctrine of work and has

often been used as the guiding rubric.[203] It is a helpful model because it uses familiar

biblical texts and is easy to remember and communicate, and therefore utilize. It's

weakness lies in its failure to address work as a company-wide and society-wide project

in addition to a personal project (i.e., its ethical dimension); plus, it can be hard to know

how some of these texts apply to current work dilemmas and choices. If employed

carelessly this approach has a tendency to downplay creation work by associating it to the

old covenant while elevating gospel work (i.e., preaching and evangelism and missions)

as the only thing which Jesus cares about in the new covenant. This conclusion fosters

many of the sacred over secular, spiritual over material, clergy over laity

misunderstandings addressed in Chapter 2.   Also, while the theology that undergirds this

model doesn't necessarily lead to this conclusion—Jesus Himself is also the Creator and

He never reneges the cultural mandate—that is often an outcome.

Another related model simply tries to address work-faith issues topically. In other

words, beyond the core gospel message, one needs to become conversant with scriptural

principles which inform key work areas, such as leadership and stewardship and calling

and performance/rewards, etc.[204] The curriculum I'm implementing utilizes this

approach by dealing with ambition and balance and success, due to their particular

relevance for young workers. Other important issues for new hires include: vocational

discernment, working under authority, diligence, ethical decision-making, contentment,

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[203] For example, Marketplace Network, Inc. (based out of Boston) built an extensive curriculum around these three primary concepts by extending them to contemporary work attitudes and situations with accompanying handbooks.

[204] A good example is Stephen R. Graves and Thomas G. Addington, *Behind the Bottom Line: Powering Business Life with Spiritual Wisdom.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003). See also John C. Maxwell and Stephen R. Graves and Thomas G. Addington, *Life@Work: Marketplace Success for People of Faith* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005).   A related book with special appropriateness for young workers is John C. Maxwell, *The 360° Leader: Developing Your Influence from Anywhere in the Organization* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Business, 2005), 84-157, about learning to "lead up" organizationally.

accountability, service, dealing with diversity/pluralism, the role and one's involvement with a local church community, failure, etc. One must simply identify a key work-faith issue, then find scriptural texts which legitimately address it and be prepared to speak to that issue.

This approach seems helpful and unavoidable, but it's difficult to adequately cover all age groups and situations and occupations. Also, its reliance upon accurate biblical exegesis can seem daunting to many Christians. In addition, many of the ethical choices facing believers under the agricultural economy and monarchy of the Old Testament or under the tight economic and political control of Roman rule in the New Testament seem far removed from democratic capitalism in America. The flip-side of this approach is to read and study Scripture with an eye to the 10-12 core issues in the Bible which are expressed repeatedly in different forms, genres and packages (i.e., assertions about God and humanity and life and the world), and then employ those core issues to work-faith applications. Both approaches—whether you begin with a felt-need in the workplace and then find appropriate Scriptures, or if you begin with biblical study and then try to apply central Christian findings/teachings to workplace situations—faithfully link the authority of Scripture with the contemporary world.

A more comprehensive model emerges from Darrell Cosden, who tries to answer how human work is related to all of reality—to God, to human beings, and to their nonhuman environment. He offers a conceptual model of three dynamically interrelated

dimensions of this transformative activity called human work: the (1) instrumental, (2)

relational, and (3) ontological.[205] Here's my synthesis of his framework:

>   1. Instrumental – work serves some end. Outcomes include meeting physical needs for self and others (i.e., earn money to pay bills and purchase wants and be generous, make profits, and lessen others' suffering), or as a means to a spiritual end (e.g., one's occasion of worship, using one's gifting, platform for witness). In other words, work enables us to meet physical and spiritual needs through what it produces, and it also serves as the context of one's sanctification (i.e., spiritual development).

>   2. Relational – work aims toward appropriate social relationships. It enables a worker to realize his/her own capability, it provides for interpersonal interaction between workers, and it can help establish right relationships in society (e.g., justice, equality).

>   3. Ontological – work has intrinsic value. This aspect is the most esoteric but it's derived from work being created by God. Cosden contends that without this sense of immediate and intrinsic value, we become alienated from the work itself because it only serves as a means to some other end (e.g., so we live for the weekend).

Cosden's framework effectively elevates the non-economic ends of work—work

is about more than the "bottom line" for Christians but it is also about the "bottom line"

(e.g, paying bills, making profit). His insistence that growing spiritually with regard to

work makes us more human (i.e., as we were created to be), and his emphasis on how

God is glorified when humans flourish is compelling. But there is so much overlap

within the categories that they blur. Cosden argues that they are interdependent, non-

hierarchical and provide checks-n-balances for each other; I simply find myself getting

confused and looking for a framework that's easier to employ. Cosden's claims about the

eternal or heavenly value of earthly work are worth considering closely. And there seems

to be an implied eschatology of the world getting better and progressing (under God's

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[205] Darrell Cosden, "A Theological Definition of Work," in *Christianity in the Workplace DMin curriculum* (Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary: 2004). His proposed framework has since been published in dialogue with eminent theologian Jurgen Moltmann in Darrell Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation* (Carlisle: Paternoster Theological Monographs, 2004).

guiding hand, of course) which I've not yet resolved theologically in a satisfactory way.

Cosden elsewhere asserts that work must push us toward values resonant with the

kingdom of God. We must be reconciled to: (1) God, (2) each other, (3) ourselves, and

(4) creation/nature/earth.[206] If our human work does not do this, then we have missed

something about its intention and inherent goodness (as created by God), or we have

missed something about where we and our work are headed—our hope for a new creation

and a new heaven and new earth. At the heart of his threefold model is a Christology in

which not just our souls are to be saved. Jesus becomes not only the means of our

salvation but the model/paradigm of salvation. Cosden relies heavily on the bodily

resurrection of Jesus (e.g., John 20), and what that means for us as our firstfruits (1 Cor.

15:20,35-49), and the comprehensive scope of salvation (Rom. 8:18-25; Col. 1:15-23). I

don't know how God will gather up everything in a consummated future (i.e., glorified

reality) but Cosden has helped me see how my eschatological vision informs my living

now. And I want my values to reflect those which God wants and intends ultimately.

The final model which merits consideration for this DMin thesis-project belongs

to David Miller, who developed it in his Ph.D. dissertation under Max Stackhouse,

respected Christian ethics professor at Princeton Theological Seminary.[207] Miller has

since become the Executive Director of the Yale Center for Faith & Culture, with specific

emphasis on ethics and spirituality in the workplace. He suggests a descriptive

framework for various attempts to integrate faith and work, and he urges both the church

and the academy to address these issues since so many workers are stymied at how to

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[206] Cosden, "A Theological Definition of Work."

[207] Miller, *The Faith at Work Movement*. It has since been published as Miller, *God at Work*.

"integrate the claims of my faith with the demands of my work." Here's my synthesis of the four quadrants in his Integration Box, each signified by a word beginning with "E":

1. EVangelization – primary mode is through evangelizing and introducing others to Christ. Workplace is seen mainly as a venue for sharing the Gospel.

2. ENrichment – primary mode is through obtaining and maintaining a spiritual connection to God at work. By practicing spiritual disciplines (e.g., meditation, prayer, therapy, yoga, devotionals) workers stay grounded and see their work tied to their faith as they contemplate their relationship with God and neighbor and self.

3. EThics – primary mode is attention to personal (virtuous leadership) and corporate ethics (broader questions of social and economic justice). Faith is a moral foundation and a source of guidance for ethical issues faced in the marketplace. The emphasis is on acting in a Christian manner, showing the Gospel in deed.

4. EXperiential – primary mode is finding intrinsic meaning and teleological purpose in one's work. Work is experienced as a calling more than simply a job, and one begins to understand the role of this work in God's will. I think this category would be better named, "EXistential."[208]

Anything inside his Integration Box is an attempt to integrate faith and work, however flawed or insufficient.[209] Miller contends that all businesspeople have a predisposition or natural orientation to how they manifest faith to work integration, influenced by church upbringing, theological teachings, societal and family conditioning, gender, geography, corporate culture, personal choice, work context, personality type, current church, etc. He further claims that most participants in the "Faith at Work" movement have a primary or dominant mode but may manifest multiple modes. The strength of Miller's framework is the way he distinguishes between personal and corporate aspects, as well as internal and external expressions of faith. His model provides greater self-awareness (and inherited family history) and respect for other types of expressions. He claims that "the

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[208] Miller, *God at Work*, 127-139.

[209] Ibid., 127.

Integration Box makes an effective entry point for those who wish to integrate faith and work, given that no one of the E's is theologically superior to another."[210] This framework is descriptive, not prescriptive—there are no correct percentages suggested for each category (and they obviously overlap and interrelate).

I will utilize each of these four explicitly Christian models of work-faith integration in my training for collegiate seniors.

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[210] Ibid., 142. Within my evangelical Christian circles, I would merge his Enrichment and Experiential categories, since they seem largely compatible, assuming that Enrichment mainly encompasses the "spirituality" movement in his analysis.

CHAPTER 4: PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The preparatory curriculum that I designed for seniors heading into their first

post-collegiate workplace experience arose from my interviews with alumni, experts and

practitioners, and employers and human resource managers.

Interview Alumni

In an attempt to understand how the Christian faith of alumni was influencing

their work (i.e., their initial paid employment), I sent out a questionnaire to 30 alumni,

indicating several work-faith issues that I wanted to discuss with them. Eighteen

responded and let me interview them. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix

A: Questions for Recent PU Graduates (i.e., ≤ 4 years). These interviews of alumni

confirmed both my previous hunches (based on anecdotal hints) and Sherman &

Hendrick's observation that "every day millions of workers go to work without seeing the

slightest connection between what they do all day and what they think God wants done in

the world."[211]

The consistency and scope of their confusion about integrating the claims of their

faith with the demands of their employment surprised me; in fact, they were only able to

provide helpful snap shots of their frustrations and current situations, but they were at a

loss to suggest what would have helped them better prepare. It should be noted that I

chose alumni who were committed Christians (who I knew would be honest with me) and

it seems likely that those who chose to respond to my questions are conscientious with

their faith. Typically, their conception of serving and relating to God was found only in

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[211] Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God*, 7.

their discretionary, non-employment time—morning devotions, church activities, tithing, service projects, missions. They had a sense that the workplace was very demanding with its own rules and desired outcomes, and it was hard for them to envision how one's Christianity might influence the way life at work operates. As one alumni[212] in the business sector remarked, "it's VERY hard to integrate my faith and work, they seem only marginally tied." Their Christianity seems to be pulling them one way while their business world seems to be pulling another, yet they often found their jobs interesting and challenging/rewarding.

At Princeton University, whose graduates served as the focus of my investigation because of my involvement in their undergraduate Christian ministry experience, nearly half of the student body (e.g., 46% for the class of 2008) is enrolled in the largest 5 departments: politics, economics, history, Wilson school (public policy), and English.[213] Princeton provides a well-rounded liberal arts education, even for those studying the hard sciences and engineering. Upon graduation, a similarly disproportionate amount of students enter financial services (investment banking, consulting, etc.),[214] partially due to the proximity of jobs in New York City and Boston and Washington, D.C. (and the aggressive recruiting of these companies). Princeton, then, provides a classic, well-rounded liberal arts education, yet one that's initially applied to the financial sector for

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[212] For the purposes of this paper, the description "alumni" will henceforth predominantly refer to those who responded to my alumni questionnaire.

[213] Tatiana Lau, "Rise in Top Five Majors Continues," *The Daily Princetonian*, May 3, 2007. The next 3 largest departments are: engineering, molecular biology, and sociology, after which another marked drop-off in enrollment occurs. There are 35 total undergraduate majors offered at Princeton University.

[214] For the Class of 2007, 43.1% of those who had jobs at graduation were employed in the financial sector (representing 16.1% of the entire graduating class). For the Class of 2006, 46.8% of those who had jobs at graduation were employed in financial services (representing 18.4% of the entire graduating class).

the largest percentage of students.[215] It's an interesting combination of classical

education and pragmatic employment. The alumni I contacted are an admittedly small

subsection of society—graduates of an Ivy League university who participated in a

particular Christian undergraduate ministry—but they provide an interesting case study of

one of the most gifted and motivated groups of young workers in American society.

It became clear to me that my interviews with Princeton alumni were not readily

going to help me pinpoint the 6-10 key topics for my teaching series with graduating

seniors. After I had interviewed Christian scholars in this field and employers of young

workers, and bolstered my own research,[216] I ranked the 10 topics that seemed most

pertinent and asked these alumni their opinion. With few exceptions, they agreed with

my topics; in fact, my suggestions spurred them to add many other topics (see "Unused

Sessions" on page 101).

Interview Experts: Scholars in this Field & Experienced Practitioners

I also interviewed 17 Christian scholars and seasoned practitioners in this field,[217]

with hopes of ascertaining the topics most worthy of exploration by graduating seniors.

In most cases, I sent them a copy of questions I wanted to ask prior to my discussions and

interviews with them. A copy of these questions is included in Appendix C: Interview

Guides for Those Who Have Thought About This Field.

Repeatedly, these scholars underscored the importance of a good theology of

work. Obviously, scholars are drawn to the power of ideas and philosophies, but the fact

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[215] There are obviously plenty of students who don't fit this generalization (i.e., go to graduate school, teach, etc.) but the percentages stand.

[216] See Chap. 3 where I review the most useful books for new workers on the transition to the workplace.

[217] They are listed in Appendix B: Scholars and Experienced Practitioners of Work-Faith Integration Interviewed.

remains that people cannot help but act from their worldview, even at work. An

insufficient or bad theology of work won't work (pun intended!) and leads to problems.

It must correspond to the way God and things really are. A lot of flimsy assumptions,

hurtful habits and dangerous patterns result from a poor theology of work.

> A lot of the spiritual frustration that ordinary working Christians experience boils
> down to feelings that they are cut off from, and only indirectly involved with, God in
> his real mission in the world. This is why it is essential for our churches to develop
> and embody a more theologically robust, practical and spiritually liberating
> understanding of missions that incorporates at its core the whole life and work of
> every believer.[218]

My interviews with these Christian scholars reinforced my intention to include a strong

component of biblical study about "work" as part of my training course.

A few of the "expert practitioners," who were campus ministers with larger

ministries and more experience (including supervising many interns), reinforced the

importance of career-specific mentoring. One suggested that "career specific alumni

mentors are the most important ingredient to a successful senior series on work." This is

not a new idea but it was a good reminder and it prompted me to coordinate a dinner with

an alumnus as part of my program.

Interview Employers and Human Resource Managers

I also interviewed 7 employers of young workers. They emphasized the

importance of being patient, fitting in to the company culture, trying to make the

company succeed, developing people skills and teamwork, and handling failure and the

inevitable mistakes as you grow. Several were also a bit skeptical of how much students

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[218] Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 129. Sherman & Hendricks also show the dangers and
ramifications of poor theological views of work, especially the "Two-Story View*" (Your Work Matters to
God,* pp. 46-58) and they ultimately conclude: "Unless you make a connection between what you do all
day and what you think God wants you to be doing, you will never find ultimate meaning in your work or
in your relationship with God" (p. 270).

can really learn about the work world at college. In one employer's words, "students are not motivated buyers . . . they don't have sufficient pain points yet." That is, it's hard to talk specifics with undergraduates because it seems too theoretical to them. But this employer did encourage me to keep trying "to bring a touch of real life to them," and thought it admirable to become a campus minister known for building a ministry to seniors around a good understanding of real life and what it takes to succeed there.

While I was unable to procure any particular company's initial training manual, several employers pointed me toward many helpful resources which I obtained and reviewed in my section on "What Employers and Human Resource Specialists Have to Say" in Chap. 3. Prior to my discussions and interviews with them, I sent them a copy of questions I wanted to ask. A copy of these questions is included in Appendix C: Interview Guides for Those Who Have Thought About This Field.

My 10-Session Series for Seniors

Based on alumni reports, and findings from scholars and practitioners in this field of work-faith integration, in addition to employers and human resource managers of young workers, I designed a 10-unit series to train collegiate seniors for life beyond graduation. Originally, I had planned to lead my final two sessions on (1) the role of Christian community/church and (2) vocational decision-making/calling. As it turned out, two sessions chosen and led by participating students emerged. I decided that these student-initiated ones were more important. Here are the topics that a Christian graduate from Princeton would benefit from understanding at the outset of their initiation into the adult world of work:

Theology of Work (3 sessions):

- Gen. 1-11 God as Worker; Man as Worker; The Goodness and
Fallenness of Work

- Highlights from the Rest of Scripture; Frameworks for Thinking
Biblically about Work

- Theology of Work: Working and Resting

Dinner with an alumnus; Movie clip discussion (1 session)

Focused Studies on Work-related Topics (3 topics, 4 sessions)

The Place of Ambition

In Search of Balance (2 sessions)

Let's Talk About Success

Student-led studies (2 sessions)

Student-led study: God and Money

Student-led study: Holding Convictions Without Being Judgmental

Each session was taught with accompanying handouts and included small group

discussion.

Theology of Work (3 sessions)[219]

Session #1 focused on the centrality of work in the Bible as well as our lives.[220]

We looked at biblical images of God as worker and humans as His designated workers.

The biblical exposition focused on Genesis 1-3, specifically the cultural mandate given to

humanity, the intrinsic goodness (and God-givenness) of work and the effect of the fall of

humankind on work.

The break-out discussion groups addressed three primary questions:

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[219] Detailed teaching plans for sessions 1-3 are included in Appendices D-F, respectively. Sessions 1 and 2 draw heavily from the theological material presented in Chapter 2, and Session 3 in Appendix F provides further biblical and historical study on the Sabbath.

[220] Pre-assigned readings include "Doing the Lord's Work," Chap. 5 in Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 106-126. And the sacred/secular confusion is unpacked in "The Sacrament of Living," Chap. 10, in A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1982), 117-128. And the article by Volf, "God at Work."

1. How has Princeton programmed us to think about work?

2. In what ways does work seem "good" to you?

3. In what ways does work seem "fallen" to you?

I concluded session #1 with a brief explication of the dangers inherent in sacred/secular and clergy/laity distinctions.

Session #2 included a quick review of the themes from session #1 and a more targeted exploration of those topics as specifically applied to the students' field of study (i.e., major). I divided the students into groups based on their majors: (a) engineering and physics, (b) economics and finance, (c) English and other languages, (d) politics and international relations (and history), and (e) biology and chemistry and pre-med. Within these roughly related fields, each group considered:

1. What is it about your field of study that attracted you to it?

2. What do you think God's good creation intention is for it?[221]

3. What do you see as the effects of the Fall upon your field of study?

Then I continued with a quick tour of scriptural teaching on work, highlighting a few texts each from the wisdom literature, historical narratives, prophets and New Testament epistles. We looked at Jesus as a worker and how He accomplished God's work for Him. Then I presented an overview of three frameworks for thinking biblically about work:

Marketplace Network's Big Three – Cultural Mandate, Great Commandment, Great Commission

Darrell Cosden's Conceptual Model – Instrumental, Relational, Ontological

The Four Quadrants in David Miller's Integration Box – EVangelization, EThics, ENrichment, EXperiential.[222]

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[221] The students found it harder to envision how their fields of study might be good (as opposed to "not bad" or "not too bad"). It helped to restate the questions such as, What delights God about this discipline and fits His evaluation of "good"? and How might men and women be involved in positively developing or cultivating it (Gen. 1:28; 2:15)? I am grateful to David Kim for his insight and phraseology at this point.

This was the most theoretical session, but these Ivy-League students seemed to appreciate seeing the underlying frameworks which have been used to make sense of work. I concluded this session by having the students revisit their own major and answer the question, "How might your work in this field be used by God to bring about His (redemptive/restorative) purposes in the world?" It brought us back to each student's personal choices.

Session #3 focused on the limits of work, the rhythms of working and resting. We looked at the revelation of the 7th day (Gen. 2:1-3), the 4th commandment (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15), Jesus' understanding of the Sabbath (e.g., Mark 2:23-3:6) and the development of the "Lord's Day" (e.g., Acts 20:7) in the early church. If animated discussion, thoughtful questions and strong opinions indicate a beneficial study, then this one was a winner, although it surprised me.[223] Princeton students excel at working hard, giving their best and being diligent; but they struggle to rest well (or even appropriately or biblically). This session struck a nerve in their current experience, not merely as a projected later need. They want to figure out how this divinely ordained pattern of work and rest is supposed to operate. The best part of the discussion centered on discoveries and practical steps that individuals had taken which helped them reclaim a sense of God's re-creation in their lives (e.g., no e-mail on Sundays, no watch, sleeping in on Saturdays).

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[222] Each of these Christian frameworks is described in detail at the end of Chapter 3.

[223] I had hoped to fill in some perceived gaps in our previous two sessions, by looking at Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God, and the concepts of work as worship in addition to work as ministry/service. However, the students had so much interest in this topic of resting that I had to scrap my other plans. As a campus minister, I must balance my concern for addressing the topics I deem most important versus the ones students perceive as current felt needs (and what's interesting to them).

Interview with Alumnus (1 session)

In response to suggestions from my interviews, I coordinated a dinner as part of my program where several of the students interacted with an '05 alumnus who works in the banking sector. Most of the students' questions for him were directed toward first job adjustments and living in the city, etc. I interjected with several observations from my interviews and reading on young workers (detailed in chapter 3[224]) and had him respond. We also utilized a clip from the movie, *The Call of the Entrepeneur,* released by the Acton Institute in 2007.[225] In the clip I chose, Frank Hanna, the CEO of HBR Capital, explains how he creates wealth by allowing others to put their good ideas into action. By analyzing business plans, consumer preferences and other market indicators, Hanna provides entrepreneurs with necessary capital to succeed. Hanna views his job as one of stewardship. He succeeds only if his clients (who trust their wealth to his management) and his companies (whom he trusts by funding) succeed. The clip calls attention to how business done well changes lives and lifts societies (and, in my estimation, glorifies God). The alumnus agreed with that overall message, but he also suggested that a greedy, less others-centered thrust was also ever-present in his industry.[226] It provided a real world illustration of the goodness and fallenness of work.

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[224] I also raised and had him respond to several of the "lead-up principles" applicable to young workers/leaders from Maxwell, *The 360° Leader*, 84-157.

[225] Another friend, who is a Princeton alumnus and devout Catholic and now works at *First Things* (in NYC), recommended this resource based on a private screening he had seen. I watched a preview of it online and utilized a clip from it in Nov. 2007. I tried to purchase it but it wasn't yet released. As of Jan. 2008, only a trailer is posted at the Acton Institute website but the full movie will be available for purchase in April 2008.

[226] Colson, a strong proponent of free-market economies and democratic capitalism, observes, "Capitalism is astonishingly efficient at generating new wealth, but it operates beneficently only when the market is shaped by moral forces coming from both the law and the culture—derived ultimately from religion. . . . Humane capitalism also depends on a sound moral culture, for a free market readily caters to the moral choices we make, supplying whatever consumers want—from Bibles to pornography. . . . Morality in the

Focused Topics – Ambition, Balance, Success (3 topics, 4 sessions)

A session focused on the subject of "God and Ambition."[227] We considered

common ambitions of collegians and whether God Himself is ambitious. We studied

Paul, who had obvious ambitions, yet who also had much to say about unhealthy

ambitions. From the Old Testament, we looked at Solomon, both his life in 1 Kings and

the reflections attributed to him in Ecclesiastes. Again, he's a man with multiple

ambitions, some wise and some foolish. We brainstormed other scriptural examples of

these polarities within ambition. We concluded with small group discussions on:

> How can we as a group foster big dreams, faith-filled goals and risk-taking?

> How can we as a group bring needed correction to misguided ambitions?

> What questions should we ask to help someone differentiate between healthy and unhealthy ambition?

> What dreams do you have? What healthy ambitions are missing for you?

Another session was titled, "In Search of Balance."[228] The biblical texts

employed included Prov. 31:10-31, Eccl. 3:1-8, Luke 2:52, Luke 10:38-42, and Exod.

18:13-27. Since real life is far from a controlled setting, balance doesn't seem to look the

same for everyone and it is an ongoing struggle requiring continual readjustment. A

single unanticipated event can radically alter what's required of us (and may seem to

impinge on our flourishing). We speculated the reasons God might have for constructing

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marketplace depends on the decisions made by each individual economic agent." (Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* , 389-390.

[227] In addition to my scriptural study, my preparations were informed by Ralph T. Mattson, *Redeemed Ambition: Balancing the Drive to Succeed in Your Work* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995). And related sections in *Life@Work Groupzine: The Art of Balance*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc. & INJOY, 2006). And "Tension 2: Love and the Competitive Drive," Chap. 5, in Nash, *Believers in Business*, 87-123.

[228] Pre-assigned reading for students included Keith Hammond, "Balance Is Bunk!," *Fast Company*, October 2004. My preparations also were informed by "Juggling Life Without Dropping the Ball," Chap. 7 in Addington, *Behind the Bottom Line*. And Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, and *Life@Work Groupzine: The Art of Balance*.

life this way and how we can adapt to this ongoing juggling act. Life is precarious and it's often hard to accurately appraise what's within our control; nonetheless, a failure to attend to areas we can control leads to helplessness and failure.

Also, we grappled with whether or not balance is desirable. Does God want us to be multi-dimensional or more single-minded? I put the students into two groups, each representing one end of this polarity, and they asserted their most persuasive case, overturned the other's arguments and tried to win the "debate." Then we talked about which position they truly found most convincing (and biblical). The students hold different views on what's realistic and desirable in this area. We ended by identifying specific symptoms that indicate when we tend to get out of balance. Students suggested ones like a messy room, too much worry, hurried meals, lost sense of humor, not wanting to shower, overreacting to little things, an inability to say "no" and being drawn to frivolous distractions. This unit required two weeks/sessions.

The next session, "Let's Talk About Success," addressed the powerful undercurrent of dominant culture and pushed the students to look closely at their definitions of success: what's the "good life"? and what's your image of a better future? I contended that American Christianity has effectively emphasized (1) spiritual growth (i.e., basic disciplines, showing up at meetings and studies), and (2) moral transformation (i.e., behaving well, staying out of trouble), but the missing piece involves (3) transformation of the aspirations and values that drive our lives.[229] Consequently, Christians' lives become compartmentalized, almost dualist, like the sacred/secular distortion which plagues our understanding of work and faith. Jesus is acknowledged and

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[229] Speakers and authors like Tom Sine, Tony Campolo, Dallas Willard and Ron Sider have helped bring this to my attention over the years.

loved, yes, but essentially the American Dream runs our lives; it's our default setting with an almost imperceptible, irresistible pull. And because we all tend to move towards our definitions of success, we will make sacrifices to achieve what we perceive to be our most important priorities.

We read foundational scriptures at the outset (e.g., Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 6:33; Mark 8:34-37; Luke 12:15; John 10:10; 2 Cor. 5:20) but we did not comment on them or analyze them. The students were guided through a personal exercise on a worksheet designed to help them consider their assumptions, motives, expectations and life trajectory. For instance, there was a list of 20 typical expectations for graduates from prestigious universities like Princeton (culled partly from my alumni responses). Things like eating out often, living close to family, making sure my kids have almost every available enrichment activity, retiring early, advancing quickly in my job, etc. were on the list, and the students added several excellent additional ones. I had the students consider which ones they were most prone to embrace uncritically (almost subconsciously), and we talked about it in hopes that we could help each other realize the extent to which we have allowed the dominant culture to define our sense of what is of value. We often have false visions of success and are self-deceived and only see clearly in hindsight, so we need the help of others. I want these students to think deeply about what they want and expect from life, and I want to arouse their God-given dreams and ethical imaginations. The discussion questions for the small groups included:

In what ways should Christians choose academic majors the same way everyone else does?

In what ways should Christians seek jobs differently than non-believers? Really?

Do we, as Christians, tend to make these and other central decisions pretty much like everyone else does (based on our income, professions, and social status)?

What world issue or problem are you consistently aware of (and bothers you), and you wish you could be involved in responding to it in some constructive way?

I wanted them to begin personalizing their conceptions of faithfulness,[230] accumulation, growth and excellence. We ended this session with a time of interactive group prayer.

Individualized Reinforcement

I also met individually with several students each week about the topics we were discussing. The increased opportunity for them to raise their particular questions made these discussions more person-specific. Overall, I found that pre-assigned reading/homework for the main sessions was unrealistic for most of the busy seniors; they simply came to the sessions ready to participate in open discussion. These appointments with individuals, however, showed that they were more willing to read the suggested materials in advance.[231] And it is these students who felt prompted to further explore work-related topics of interest to them, which I'll now describe.

Student-led Studies (2 sessions)

In response to my main sessions, two seniors subsequently taught lessons about future work-related issues that they wanted to examine more thoroughly. An '08 finance major constructed a study on "God and Money" that pushed us all to consider the

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[230] Prof. Ellen Charry of Princeton Seminary prefers the phrase "human flourishing" as opposed to the word "success" (which seems so secular, capitalistic to her) or the word "faithfulness" (which seems so religious). She insists that God aids human flourishing, in so much as this includes living a life that is beneficial to our own well-being (individual) and contributes to the thriving of others (communal). The apostle Paul's grand Christian vision is a cosmic one, with Jesus at the center and everything being affected (Col. 1).

[231] I gave these students a copy of my "Chapter 2: A Theology of Work," which they told me was more helpful and thorough than the other readings I had assigned from Stevens and Volf and Tozer with regard to the theology of work (cited on page 92 footnote). That was encouraging!

negative and positive sides of money. His own reflections regarding how "to maximize opportunities amid uncertainties" (drawn from his economics classes) prompted him to make new connections with biblical truths. Another student, an '08 economics major, formulated a study around the topic of holding strong personal convictions in the workplace without simultaneously being judgmental of others. His internship with a packing company in the summer of 2007 raised some questions for him about how to relate to different ages, different levels of academic attainment and different faiths (and levels within those faiths). Granted, this is an ongoing topic for Christians in any society, but it arose from his most recent workplace experience and it's something which he anticipates being a challenge again. Another student, an '08 chemical engineering major, was unable to finish her study/preparation, but she wants to look at the issue of "doing your best" and what that actually means (both to God and Christians) and what boundaries exist around that admonition in Col. 3:23. Hopefully, she can complete her study and lead us in an examination of this topic this upcoming spring semester.

Additional Teaching

I also led two seminars at a New York/New Jersey collegiate ministry retreat on the topic of "Christianity and Work: What Graduating Seniors Need to Know" in October 2007. Essentially, I recapped the first two sessions of my on-campus curriculum about taking seriously the biblical realities of the goodness and fallenness of work. I was surprised how many juniors came, despite the limiting title. And the input of military cadets, school teachers, accountants, aspiring pastors and government workers and those employed in the arts rounded out my own campus perspective.

Unused Sessions

As stated earlier, I also prepared lessons that I was not able to teach on the topics of (1) the role of Christian community/church for young workers and (2) vocational discernment/calling/career decision-making.[232] Given the time constraints of the semester, I wasn't able to utilize these studies. Perhaps I can use them in the spring semester with these seniors or with the next group of seniors in the fall.

In the future, I would also like to consider teaching on other topics that grew out of my research and the alumni suggestions, such as working under authority (specifically dealing with failure or a negative performance review), making a respectful appeal, the kingdom of God (and how work fits within it), ethical decisions and frameworks, telling the truth (i.e., honesty, transparency, getting information), work as worship, and work as ministry/service. Additionally, as a campus minister, any time I teach on topics like stewardship and service/servanthood and influence and accountability and leadership and performance/rewards and diligence, I should look to make workplace applications and use workplace illustrations.

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[232] Pre-assigned readings include "Calling" in Robert Banks & R. Paul Stevens, ed., *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity: An A-to-Z Guide to Following Christ in Every Aspect of Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 97-102. My preparations include synopses from Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998), 31ff. And David W. Miller, "The Sunday-Monday Gap: Called to Pew or Profit?," Yale Center for Faith and Culture, http://www.yale.edu/faith/esw/centerReadings.htm (accessed September 18, 2007). And Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 83-88.   And from Ralph Mattson & Arthur Miller, *Finding a Job You Can Love* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter describes what I learned from the project that may be of value to others with similar goals, as well as changes that I'd recommend if a project of this nature is undertaken in the future.

Stimulating Alumni

I had hoped to help graduating seniors think through what they will face in their future workplaces, from a Christian perspective, but I also found that this process of contacting alumni stimulated the alumni. The process of interviewing the alumni encouraged them to reassess their job patterns, keep seeking God in their daily lives and grapple with the implications of how to do it better at work. Moreover, the alumnus who came to share his wisdom seemed energized by this process while also being reminded of what God had taught him while an involved student in this ministry.[233] Young workers, like all of us, need trusted, godly friends to rejuvenate them with a fresh vision of God's glory in their lives, in a way that takes seriously their current life experiences.

To keep alumni engaged in this topic and also connected with this ministry, I need to figure out a way to provide some kind of periodic training event(s) for them. Alumni find themselves in a world far removed from their collegiate experience, a world with a whole different schedule and protocol and set of expectations. I sense there's a pent-up demand among young workers (i.e., alumni) for understanding how faith fits into work. It's important to revisit questions such as: What do you have to believe about work and

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[233] This process provides both a tangible way for alumni to give back and it also keeps them informed of what is going on so they can better pray for this ministry.

the world to take your job seriously? How do you understand your relationship to the

world? In what sense does your current work matter to God? Why are you working so

hard? or half-heartedly? What makes me different from other workers? There needs to

be an ongoing re-evaluation of their chosen lifestyles and occupations. "The first few

years in the labor market constitute an exploratory phase, in which graduates 'shop

around' and seek further labor market information. Graduates do not immediately find

the jobs which properly match their education—a result that is in line with traditional job

search and job matching theories."[234]

Gaps

A colleague, who leads a large predominantly Asian-American ministry at

Princeton, and who is spending his '07-'08 sabbatical teaching at the Center for Faith and

Work at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, helped me see unique

dynamics which international and/or first-generation Asian-American students face that I

didn't adequately explore in my project (e.g., family expectations, concept of job

satisfaction).[235] In a book my friend recommended, the author, Thomas Lange, suggests

that "the United States is arguably the only industrialized country in the world without a

national, institutionalized system to help its young people navigate successfully between

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[234] Thomas Lange, ed., *Understanding the School-to-Work Transition: An International Perspective* (Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1998), 123.

[235] Currently, the demographics of this campus ministry include a higher proportion of African-Americans as compared to the U.S. Census of 2000. See U.S. Census Bureau, "Profile of General Demographic Characteristics, 2000," U.S. Census Bureau, http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_bm=y&-qr_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U_DP1&-geo_id=01000US&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&-_lang=en&-format=&-CONTEXT=qt (accessed December 7, 2007). This ministry includes approximately 55% European-Americans (compared to 60% in the U.S. census), 10% Latin-Americans (compared to 12%), 25% African-Americans (compared to 12%) and 5% Asian-Americans (compared to 3.5%); however, the Asian representation on campus clearly exceeds that of the census.

formal schooling and rewarding careers."[236] If Lange is correct, then campus ministers, along with parents, other mentors, and peer groups, become increasingly influential sources of guidance for graduating students.

It would also be a beneficial to interview more non-Christian employers.

I need to add more accessible case studies to my program.[237] The one I tried with students (which came from an alumnus) during my individual appointments proved too formidable for them. It's hard for seniors to accurately enter workplace scenarios. In an admittedly derivative way, perhaps the senior thesis at Princeton can serve as a test case,[238] in so much as Princeton represents its own kind of marketplace. The thesis is definitely a crucible experience for seniors, a bridge to something new and demanding with increased levels of pressure. I suspect the pending senior thesis is why the sessions on working and resting and the one on balance became especially relevant to them.

Suggestions by Academic Year

Let me offer a few suggestions for each year of collegiate ministry. Overall, academic course work at Princeton is hard even for these gifted, motivated students. They are expected to be superb at writing, thinking, taking tests, handling pressure, dealing with high expectations and taking initiative. They are capable "go-getters" who are "on track" and don't make many excuses, but they tend to overcommit and neglect

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[236] Lange, ed., *Understanding the School to Work Transition: An International Perspective*, 7.

[237] "It is usually less threatening to observe what others experience…. you can safely test and rethink what your response or actions might be." See Ben Sprunger and Carol Suter and Wally Kroeker, *Faith Dilemmas for Marketplace Christians* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997), 13. Case studies enable students to participate vicariously in the hard choices young workers face, but finding engaging, applicable and worthwhile ones is difficult. And getting fresh illustrations and possible case studies from the work world is another potential benefit of regularly interviewing recent alumni.

[238] Princeton seniors must write an undergraduate thesis as a requirement for graduation; it's a formidable endeavor still required only by a select few undergraduate institutions.

healthy boundaries. For all undergraduates, it behooves a campus minister to keep emphasizing how Jesus Christ transforms every aspect of our lives, including one's coursework. These curricular studies serve as one's "job" within the task of studenthood.

At Princeton University, the Office of Career Services advises freshmen to begin developing plans from the beginning of their collegiate career: "As you become involved in extracurricular activities, be aware that you are gaining skills and experience that will be useful as you consider summer jobs and internships. . . . Begin putting together your resume and meet with a career counselor to get feedback."[239]

This focus on distinguishing one's resume as students plan for their future pervades the campus ethos; however, few students would feel comfortable even venturing a guess at "What do you want to do?" or "What is your purpose in life?" or "How do you plan to use your particular gifts/skills to engage the needs in this world?" Moreover, a question like, "What do you think God is calling you to do?" produces palpable fear. As a campus minister, I want to help students raise these questions and see what both Scripture and the internal leading of the Holy Spirit have to say about career decisions and ideals and lifestyles. Also, if I as a campus minister am going to plant seeds for later work-faith integration, I need to provide that same integration to students in their academic pursuits.

At Princeton, academic majors are chosen in the spring semester of the sophomore year; therefore, a campus minister should discuss the topic of choosing a major prior to that time. It's unwise to choose a major based solely on what is expected because the student has to live with the decision throughout his/her undergraduate career,

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[239] Office of Career Services at Princeton University, "Freshman Year Advice," Princeton University, http://web.princeton.edu/sites/career/Undergrad/Index.html#frosh (accessed 1/2/08).

not his/her parents or other mentors. Students needs to honestly consider what they are

good at, what they love and motivates them and which courses of study lead them to the

jobs in which they can best glorify God.[240]

Juniors, facing the addition of developmental requirements/classes plus an

expanding social circle in eating clubs, usually need encouragement to make good

choices amid their stressful load. But they don't seem interested or ready to seriously

consider workplace preparation.[241]

I implemented my thesis-project in the Fall of the senior year because that seems

the most opportune time, given that the spring semester is consumed with undergraduate

senior theses. Within the senior year, it makes sense to have alumni from the consulting

and investment banking sectors in the early fall, as that is when interested seniors must

apply for positions for the following year. And it makes sense to have alumni from

engineering and applied science, education/academia, medical and law professions, and

non-profit sectors in the early spring, since that is the time when applications tend to be

handled for those pursuits.[242]

I'm also considering having graduating seniors sketch out a list of ideals and

desired practices for their post-college life regarding their faith and work (perhaps in

early May after they complete their senior theses). I could then mail this to them one

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[240] Students are advised to study what they are committed to and hopefully love, more so than what they think they have to study or what their parents tell them to study or what they see the largest number of their classmates studying.

[241] Juniors see this as their last chance to focus only on school. Summer internships after the junior year are typical, though, and they are interested in those. Ideally, a deepening theology of work ought to be inculcated throughout a student's collegiate training so that the corresponding Biblical principles become part of his/her theological bloodstream prior to a student's senior year.

[242] Teach For America, Princeton in Asia (and Africa and Latin America), and Project 55 are exceptions and require fall applications. I better understood these timelines thanks to Jenitta M. Kwong, "The 2005 Manna Alumni Study: Correlations between Faith and Job Satisfaction," (Princeton, NJ: Manna Christian Fellowship, 2005).

year later as a reminder. Seniors who are graduating need to be intentional and have a

strategy for remaining faithful. An alternative would be to create an event for alumni at

the annual Princeton reunion celebrations in late May which precede each graduation.

Utilizing Alumni

I also have a few suggestions about utilizing alumni. Undergraduates welcome

the chance to meet alumni who have gone through similar concerns that are now

preoccupying their minds about the future, and the alumni feel honored to be asked to

help. First-year alumni have the advantage of still knowing many current

undergraduates, but their perspective on work is limited. After approximately two years

of working, alumni seem to have a much deeper sense of awareness of themselves and

what is required in their workplaces. Thus, I recommend using alumni in their third year

of working.[243] When inviting alumni, they should be urged to include stories and

illustrations from their own experience and to avoid sharing only principles and concepts.

This is important to stress. Events utilizing alumni as speakers/presenters may also be

conducive to sharing practical stories and illustrations from the campus minister's own

life (and what s/he knows of other graduates).

Recommended Resources

In my estimation, the best short resources on these topics for young adults are[244]:

Steve Garber, *Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Unbelief During the University Years* (1996).[245]

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[243] Granted, it can be hard to keep track of recent alumni because they tend to change jobs and locations often within their first few years following graduation. Appendix C: Additional Questions for Future Alumni Interviews/Surveys provides more possibilities.

[244] They make good gifts for rising seniors and graduating seniors.

the 18-page online article, "God at Work" by Miroslav Volf (2005).[246]

Richard Lamb, *Following Jesus in the "Real World": Discipleship for the Postcollege Years* (1995).[247]

and T. Jason Smith, *Leaving Campus and Going to Work* (2006).[248]

Conclusion

I must anticipate graduates' points of common difficulty regarding the transition from college to work (i.e, the predictable crises for a young worker) so that they can live a life that is consistent with biblical values and their own deeply held beliefs. It's a strategic opportunity for campus ministers to affect students at an impressionable stage of their development and I hope to expedite their process of learning these inevitable lessons.

> Today, there is perhaps no "critical time" or "decisive point" like that of the transition between college and post-college. . . . Colleges do attempt to provide some aid as we make this transition—but not in ways that are especially helpful for Christians. "Faithfulness to God" is not a relevant category for most career-planning and job-placement centers at secular schools. Any help offered usually neglects considerations of faith and spiritual growth. This makes the decisive point of the transition between college and post-college all the more critical for Christians, for we are swimming upstream as we try to make faithful choices in a faithless world.[249]

Following Christ as an employee/worker is a process and a journey. None of us ever has everything about it figured out, but young adults can increasingly begin to settle

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[245] A close second would be Plantinga Jr., *Engaging God's World*.

[246] I also highly recommend Chap. 5, "Doing the Lord's Work," in Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, 106-126. And the 8-page article entitled, "How to Be a Disciple" by Dallas Willard in *Christian Century,* which is excerpted and adapted from his book *Divine Conspiracy*.

[247] Lamb's sequel to this book further emphasizes the importance of Christian community: Richard Lamb, *The Pursuit of God in the Company of Friends* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

[248] A noteworthy workbook is also Naquin, *How to Succeed in Your First Job*.

[249] Richard Lamb, *Following Jesus in the Real World: Discipleship for the Postcollege Years* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 11.

in on central convictions and habits that will be formative for the rest of their working lives. Graduating seniors need to know that their identity will be challenged in the workplace, and they need to know that co-workers will live and act differently, because they believe differently.

Consequently, Christians need to determine what they believe to be true about work and the world and humanity. An adequate theology of work is vital. Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre once wrote, "I can only answer the question: *what am I to do?* if I answer the prior question: *of what story do I find myself a part?*" Which story will recent graduates allow to give meaning and shape to their lives—the perceived "American Dream," the path of least resistance, or, hopefully, the biblical story. We can't let other stories tell us what work is for. The story upon which we base our work lives must be in sync with God's revealed will. A campus minister observed, "when talking to students about transitional issues you need to give them new hardware, not software."[250] He means that collegians must work on understanding the foundational issues of life and faith, and that campus ministers need to help students think deeply, and perhaps differently than much of the world, about how work fits within the economy of God.

Let me close with an analogy which has encapsulated my hopes for this thesis project. For years I've put considerable energy into premarital preparation in hopes of strengthening the future marriages of engaged couples. Of course, I can really only prepare them for marriage if I raise the key issues and facilitate vital interactions between them. There's no guarantee that the newlyweds will implement what we considered, but

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[250] Derek Melleby, "Navigating the College Transition," *Comment*, December 2006, 21.

it's worth trying because the marriage relationship is central to God and has enormous bearing on one's happiness and effectiveness in life. I know that many of their determinative choices will come later but I've seen the value of striving to get engaged couples off to a good start in marriage.

Similarly, now I'm striving to do the same with collegiate seniors as they embark on the world of post-college work. I'm trying to raise key issues that graduates will face and offer some biblical guidance and Christian frameworks for living as a worker. There's certainly no guarantee that they'll navigate this new relationship with work successfully, but it's worth trying to help them.

It is my hope that the students who look to me as a Christian mentor could say, "Thanks for helping me merge onto the fast-moving, unpredictable, exciting, and often dangerous highway of work. By raising some real workplace issues with me while I was still a student, you helped me envision work in a way that got me off to a good start. And you created an appetite in me for wanting to connect my faith with my work as you began to show me how I might draw upon the resources of the Christian faith as I embarked on my first job." If God can use these efforts to that end, I will be grateful.

While graduates must decide if they want to cooperate, they are not alone. As Dallas Willard observes about Jesus in regard to our full transition into discipleship, "we can count on him to meet us in that transition and not leave us to struggle with it on our own, for he is far more interested in it than we can ever be. He always sees clearly what is at issue. We rarely do."[251] These young workers, and myself as their campus minister, can "do our best to present ourselves to God as ones approved, workers who do not need

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[251] Willard, "How to Be a Disciple," 437.

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to be ashamed and who correctly handle the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) May God

enable us to be faithful.

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS FOR RECENT PU GRADUATES (I.E., ≤ 4 YEARS)

with regard to their initial workplace experience(s)

What do you do?

How does your work fit into your organization?

How is work different than you expected? (What like? Dislike?)

Does being a Christian (i.e., person of faith) affect your work?

> • What difference, if any, does it make to be a follower of JC in the work you do?
>
> • Does it matter in the way you do the work which comprises your job description?
>
> • How separate or integrated do you view your faith and your work?

What do you wish you'd learned at college relating to faith & work? (i.e., What do you wish someone had told you about work)? Really?

> • Prior to being on-the-job, do you think it was learnable? Could it have been taught or anticipated, or really only learned on-the-job by yourself in more of a trial-n-error manner?
>
> • Did any Christian mentor/pastor/friend help you "integrate the claims of your faith with the demands of your work" during your early career? How?
>
> • What do you wish your pastor or previous campus minister knew about your work?

How explicit are you with your Christian faith (to co-workers)?

> • Do you have other Christians (i.e., persons of faith) in your workplace? Is that good or bad?

What questions are you now asking about work? Christianity?

What challenges do you face in your workplace? Opportunities?

> Describe a difficult decision/challenge/opportunity? (i.e., not just an overtly religious one) Is it now resolved or still a live issue? Do you think it might serve as an effective case study for seniors to consider?
>
> What does "having integrity" look like at your job? Are there people not doing that?
>
> Have there been times when you were asked or expected to do something which went against your conscience/values? How did you handle it? Can you give an example.
>
> What are the top business issues facing your industry today?

What advice would you give to a senior in college heading into your job?

APPENDIX B: SCHOLARS AND EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS OF WORK-FAITH INTEGRATION INTERVIEWED

I am grateful to the following persons who shared their time and insight with me and helped frame my thoughts. It does not imply an endorsement.

Dr. Scott Cormode – Hugh de Pree Associate Professor of Leadership Development at Fuller Seminary; previously of Claremont School of Theology

Dr. Vincent Bacote – Associate Professor of Theology and Director of the Center for Applied Christian Ethics at Wheaton College

Ed Miller – New York/New Jersey Regional InterVarsity Christian Fellowship staff worker and coordinator of alumni relations.

John Maxwell – founder of Injoy, Inc., and international expert on leadership; author of *The 360° Leader: Developing Your Influence from Anywhere in the Organization* (2005)

Dr. Christian Scharen – Director of the Faith as a Way of Life project at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture

Gideon Strauss – Senior Fellow at Work Research Foundation (Canada), Editor at *Comment* magazine

Steven Garber – author of *Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior during the University Years* (1996); Director of Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation and Culture

Katherine Leary – Director of the Center for Faith and Work at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City

Dr. Steve Graves – co-founder of Cornerstone Consulting Group (Fayetteville, AR)

Daniel Lee – pastor of Compass Fellowship in New York City

Dr. D. Michael Lindsay – now Professor of Sociology at Rice University; studied under Robert Wuthnow at Princeton University; author of *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite* (2007)

Mike McQuitty – Baptist campus minister at Syracuse University and pastor

Darrell Cook – Director of Baptist Collegiate Ministry at Virginia Tech

Bill Boyce – Director of Princeton Evangelical Fellowship at Princeton University

David Kim – Director of Manna Christian Fellowship at Princeton University; now also works for Center for Faith and Work at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City

Dr. Keith Brewer – Methodist chaplain and visiting lecturer at Princeton University; adjunct Professor at Somerset Christian College (NJ) and Asbury Seminary (KY)

Ryan Bonfiglio – past Director of Athletes in Action at Princeton University

Peter Hazelrigg – past Presbyterian chaplain at Princeton University

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR THOSE WHO HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS FIELD

(Colleagues/Practitioners, Scholars & Authors)

with regard to faith and work for initial hires (i.e., young workers)

What questions are most initial hires asking about work?

> (i.e., What do you perceive to be their challenges? opportunities?)

> (i.e., How is work different than they expected? what like? dislike?)

Have you seen any appreciable changes for initial workers in the past 20 years?

Do you think Christian graduates are even attempting to integrate their Christian faith/values in the first few years (i.e., ≤ 3) on their jobs?

Did you have any Christian/mentor/friend help you in your initial adjustment to the workplace? How?

> (i.e., Did anyone help you "integrate the claims of your faith with the demands of your work" during your early career?)

Suggest 5 topics which a campus minister could (or should) address at college which will most benefit a young worker (coming from college) when s/he arrives in that first job/marketplace?

> 1,
> 2.
> 3.
> 4.
> 5.

What do you think it will take for a 24-year old to be interested in a holistic life and transcendent questions of meaning and purpose and overcome the tendency to be most/only interested in promotions and paychecks?

> • or is this a flawed question?

> (i.e, What could a campus minister realistically contribute in advance?) Prior to being on-the-job, do you think it was learnable? Could it have been taught or anticipated, or really only learned on-the-job by oneself in more of a trial-n-error manner?

In what ways do you see college/university as a workplace itself (for students) with transferable lessons to their post-collegiate workplace? And in what ways is it not?

Would an Ivy League context change your answers?

Learning More & Finding Resources

What models/rubrics/concepts regarding faith and work have you found most helpful in addressing this topic with collegians? (i.e., which seem most vital for young workers coming from college?)

Do you know of anyone writing or researching this topic from a young worker perspective?

> (I feel like I'm at a fascinating intersection of workplace theology and first job adjustment (human resources or corporate training) and standard young adult development (sociology) and business ethics and leadership. I'm intrigued by the possibilities but also overwhelmed at the potential dead-ends. That's why I'm asking because much of this is new to me or beyond my normal scope and I'm looking for guidance. Perhaps my distinctive will be simply synthesizing interdisciplinary findings.)

> • Are there any other resources or books or articles or organizations of which you are aware that may relate to my topic of inquiry? Or persons whom I can write or call?

How might I go about finding good case studies for collegians (most likely seniors) regarding future workplace issues and scenarios? Perhaps you can point me in the right direction.

> • Are there other pedagogical approaches which you think a campus minister may be able to utilize effectively?

Given the extensive history of teaching on calling and vocation throughout Christendom, if you had to recommend one article or book on this topic for collegians, what would it be?

Intro: Centrality of Work

• Percentage of time, reports of alumni

God as Worker

• Among the many metaphors, the Bible depicts God as a worker (Gen. 1-2; Job 10:3-12), as builder/architect (Prov. 8:27-31), teacher (Matt. 7:28-29), doctor/healer (Matt. 21;12,17), weaver (Ps. 139:13-16; Job 29:14), gardener/farmer (Gen. 2:8-19; John 15:1-8), shepherd (Ps. 23; John 10), potter (Jer. 18:1-10; Rom. 9:19-21); metalworker (Isa.1:24-26; 31:9), and homemaker (Luke 15:8).

Creator -- Gen. 1:1; 2:2,4 => Heb. 11:3; Rom. 4:17; John 1:3; Col. 1:16

• Speaks, names, evaluates, sets boundaries, blesses, makes room for other beings…

Sustainer -- Acts 14:17; Ps. 104:10-30

• Work of God does not stop with creation. And He guides to His intended purposes in history (Deut. 11:1-7; John 5:17).

Redeemer -- work of Jesus Christ

Future -- Ultimate judge (2 Cor. 5:10) and makes all things new (Rev. 21:5)

God works, makes work and intends for work to be good.

Work as Co-Creation: Humans as stewards/rulers

• In Genesis, the working and giving of God provide the premise of all human activity.

Made in "the image of God"

• The crowning piece of creation (Gen. 1:26ff; Ps. 8) yet still created/limited.

1:28: Be fruitful. . . multiply. . . subdue. . .

• Reveals a special relationship to God.

Ruling = ?

• Producing, caring, maintaining, discovering, being creative, establish civilization--build, instruct, research, learn => products & institutions

Cultural mandate remains in effect

• And is part of our job description

2:4ff -- man, the worker, is presented with what he has to work on

• Also given resources (2:16, 21), boundaries (2:17), a suitable helper (2:18ff) and powers of decision-making (2:18-23).

• Human work is a necessary part of the exchange between God and his people. Work is an essential part of our job description--make decisions, clean, drive, write...

2:15 cultivate = till = work

• This frequent Old Testament word denoting work (or service) will later be used as a customary verb for worship.

2:15 take care of = keep = preserve

- God's representative in the creaturely realm. Man is to care for, not exploit. ≈ Num. 6:24.

A delightful partnership -- "it was good" => naming, reproducing, natural satisfaction

• As Genesis account continues, man's work branches out rapidly: breeds sheep & goats (4:2, 20), builds cities (4:17), becomes a musician (4:21, develops the arts), makes tools (4:22), develops vine-growing (9:20ff) and makes huge buildings with new building materials (11:3).

Discussion Question: In what ways does work seem "good" to you?

Limits of Work -- rhythms of life, play, rest -- keeping work in perspective

Revelation of the 7th day (Gen. 2:1-3)

• Days of work are not the only days that God has created. Work is part of a bigger whole.

Echoes of later Sabbath command (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15).

=> Lord's day (Sunday) => eternal "Sabbath rest" (Heb. 4:3-11)

The Fall of Humankind and Its Effect on Work

• The human workers violated their one boundary as they fulfilled their commission and their disobedience produces major consequences for work.

Ground becomes cursed (3:17) and trials become associated with work (3:18ff).

• But work itself is not cursed; in fact, the destiny of man is that he should work the ground (3:23).

• Adam esp. alienated from that which he was made ground-working task; Eve from Adam and her childbearing task.

• Man remains a co-worker with God even though it's more difficult (see 5:29).

• Work predates the Fall but something did go terribly wrong.

Work becomes hard, burdensome, painful

• Relational sense of community broken and enmity is experienced.

• All creation groins and is subjected to futility (Rom. 8:20, 22) -- the whole scheme of things under man's domain was damaged.

Spiraling downward: Cain (4:11-14), Lamech (4:23-24), Noah, Babel (11:1-9)

• Humankind is endangered through the development of civilization by individual--Lamech in 4:23-24 (weapons). By groups--story of Babel in 11:1-9 (upward rather than outward). Remarkable possibilities for both progress and destruction.

• Yet explicitly re-establishes His commission with Noah (and humankind) in 9:6-7--keep spreading out and increasing.

What are ways that work seems "fallen" to you?

• Enslaves workers--exploitation, discrimination, greed, unsafe working conditions; Becomes an idol--sign of one's worth, economic achievement replaces God; Creation does not always cooperate--natural resources hard to find or work with, weather, etc.; Pollution, market forces sabotage, monotonous--drudgery, not satisfying, never any break (overwork), etc.

• Sin as corruption--re-ordering & re-claiming. Sin as guilt--need cleansing, healing. Sin as pre-existing condition, manifested by our repeated choices.

Goodness + Fallenness

• Delight & drudgery; Dignified yet bothersome; Good & evil are tangled together now in complex ways regarding work

• People can work hard to create bad things, or good things that don't turn a profit.

• Intrinsically work is good for us, good for the world and good for God. => not a "necessary evil" or a punishment. And man never works alone; God is always there working as well. And to this day, work remains to be done.

Extra Talking Points

Sacred/Secular

• Do you think there's a difference between sacred and secular work?

• Are "worldly activities" viewed as a major distraction to a person's spiritual development?

• How can integrate the claims of our faith with the demands of our work? Most errors involved either (1) separating ourselves from the work in this world, or (2) forgetting God and devoting ourselves to the pursuit of success as the world defines it.

Dallas Willard

• "There is truly no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and the secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ. Holy people must stop going into "church work" as their natural course of action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking and journalism with the same zeal previously given to evangelism or to pastoral and missionary work." -- from *The Spirit of the Disciplines*

A.W. Tozer

• "One of the greatest hindrances to the Christian's internal peace is the common habit of dividing our lives into two areas--the sacred and the secular. But this state of affairs is wholly unnecessary. We have gotten ourselves on the horns of a dilemma, but the dilemma is not real. It is a creature of misunderstanding. The sacred-secular antithesis has no foundation in the New Testament." -- from *The Pursuit of God*, p.117, 119

Clergy/Laity

• Hampered by hierarchy; Dangers; "full-time" Christian workers?

Intro / Review

• Centrality of Work -- percentage of time; When graduate; Does my work matter to God? Why?

• Last week we focused on Gen. 1-11.

> God as Worker -- Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, Judge/Restorer
>
> Work as God-given and good -- Gen. 1:28ff, 2:15
>
> • Humans made in the image of God. What it means to be human in the mandate to work--create, maintain, seek justice, etc.
>
> Work as affected by the Fall -- Gen. 3:17ff.
>
> Danger of Sacred/Secular and Clergy/Laity dichotomies
>
> Discussion Question: How has Princeton University programmed us to think about work?
>
> • What do you expect from your work?
>
> • We cannot help but act from our worldview, even at work.

Small Group Discussion Questions: Within your field of study. . .

• Many of us tend to think that at best we can simply be involved in something that's "not bad" or "not too bad," but it seems harder to envision how our jobs might be good.

> 1. What is it about your field of study that attracted you to it?
>
> 2. What do you think God's creation intention is/was for it?
>
> • What delights Him and fits His evaluation of "good"?
>
> • How might humans be involved in positively developing or cultivating it?
>
> 3. What do you see as the effects of the Fall upon your field of study?
>
> • What is there about it that is out of sync with God's purposes? What grieves or offends Him?
>
> 4. How do you imagine your work in this field to be involved in God redemptive/restorative purposes, his plan to change the world? Be as specific as possible.

Racing Through the Rest of Scripture

> Proverbs
>
> > Diligence -- Prov. 6:6-11; 10:4; 26:13-16
> >
> > Seize opportunities or watch them slip by -- Prov. 14:23; 20:4
> >
> > God normally blesses man's labors (10:22; 16:11) but is not obligated to do so (16:1-5, 9).
>
> Ecclesiastes

Work as gift from God for which we ought to be thankful -- Eccl. 2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18-19

Work as limited and frustrating -- Eccl. 2:14-23

Historical Narratives

Themes of blessing and deliverance

- Joseph; Mordecai; Esther; Daniel;

- God helps us overcome failures (Samson) or gives new opportunities (Peter, John Mark)

Sometimes God explicitly enables skillful work -- Exod. 31:1-5; 1Chr. 28:11-12

Prophets reject human achievement which comes by oppression and injustice

(e.g., Hab. 2:9-12; Jer. 22:13-17).

New Testament Epistles

Don't ignore the needy (James 1:27; 1 John 3:17-18) or poor (Gal. 2:10).

Respect authority in one's labors (1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:19; 1 Pet. 2:18)

Commanded to work (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thes. 3:10-12; 1 Tim.5:8)

See God as supreme boss (Eph. 6:5-7; Col. 3:23; Titus 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:9)

- When asked, "For whom do you work?," it's accurate to say that we work for ourselves (and our dependents), for a particular company, and for the well-being of our communities (and even society), but we also can respond that we work for God. We can think of God as being our employer or boss. Of course, a believer's relationship with God is much more than one of employee to boss, but that's one image that it includes that pertains to work. As we work, we serve God, who gave us tasks to do to achieve His purposes in the world.

Attitude and conduct key (Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:23-4:1).

Jesus

As a carpenter

Accomplished God's work for Him – John 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Rom. 5:1, 6; Heb. 7:11-28, 10:1-18

- "Work is not our enemy, nor are other people. Sin is our enemy. And only Jesus is adequate to deal with sin."

His teaching on the kingdom of God – Matt. 6:10, 33

- In the eschaton. . .

Frameworks for thinking biblically about work

Three Central texts and ideas for understanding work-faith issues -- Marketplace Network

1. Cultural Mandate (Gen. 1:26-31)

- earth-keeping, creating civilizations => covers the human assignment (i.e., job description) given by God and is often referred to as "creation work"

2. Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40)

- love God first and foremost, and this love naturally expresses love for neighbors (i.e., service in the world). Vertical love for God is linked with horizontal love we extend in service to those all around us. Reaching up... reaching out.

3. Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)

- proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and make disciples. => captures a dimension of redemptive work, sometimes referred to as "gospel work" or the New Creation mandate.

Pros & Cons

- Uses familiar texts, easy to remember and communicate, and therefore utilize.

- Fails to address work as a society-wide project and it can be hard to know how some of these texts apply to current work dilemmas and choices.

Darrell Cosden's Conceptual Model

1. Instrumental -- work serves some end.

- Outcomes include meeting physical needs for self and others (i.e., earn money to pay bills and purchase wants and be generous, make profits, and lessen other's suffering), or a s a means to a spiritual end (e.g., one's occasion of worship, using one's gifting, platform for witness). In other words, work enables us to meet physical and spiritual needs through what it produces and it also serves as the context of one's sanctification (i.e., spiritual development).

2. Relational -- work aims toward appropriate social relationships.

- It enables a worker to realize his/her own capability, it provides for interpersonal interaction between workers, and it can help establish right relationships in society (e.g., justice, equality).

3. Ontological -- work has intrinsic value.

- This aspect is the most esoteric but it's derived from being created by God. Cosden contends that without this sens of immediate and intrinsic value, we become alienated from the work itself since it only serves as a means to some other end (e.g., so we live for the weekend).

Pros & Cons

- Pros: elevates the non-economic ends of work; Growing spiritually with regards to work makes us more human; how God is glorified when humans flourish

- Cons: So much overlap that the categories blur; Confusing

- Work should push us toward values resonant with the kingdom of God and we must be reconciled to (1) God, (2) each other, (3) ourselves, (4) creation/nature/earth. If our human work does not do this, then we have missed something about its intention and inherent goodness (as created by God) or we have missed something about where we and our work are headed--our hope for a new creation and a new heaven and a new earth.

4 Quadrants in David Miller's Integration Box

- All are attempts "to integrate the claims of my faith with the demands of my work," however flawed or insufficient.

• A descriptive framework--not prescriptive (i.e., no correct percentages assigned for each category)

1. Evangelization -- primary mode is through introducing others to Jesus Christ.

• Workplace is seen mainly as a venue for sharing the gospel.

2. Ethics -- primary mode is attention to personal (virtuous leadership) and corporate ethics (broader questions of social and economic justice).

• Faith is a moral foundation and a source of guidance for ethical issues faced in the marketplace. The emphasis is on acting in a Christian manner, showing the gospel in deed.

• How does the character of a loving, just, holy God inform situations I face?

3. Enrichment -- primary mode is through obtaining and maintaining a spiritual connection to God at work.

• By practicing spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, meditation, therapy, yoga, devotionals) workers stay grounded and see their work tied to their faith as they contemplate their relationship with God and neighbor and self.

4. Experiential -- primary mode is finding intrinsic meaning and teleological purpose in one's work.

• Work is experienced as a calling more than simply a job, and one begins to understand the role of this work in God's will.

Pros & Cons

• Pros: distinguishes between personal & corporate aspects, as well as internal & external expressions of faith; provides greater self-awareness (and of inherited family history) and respect for other types of expressions.

• Cons: Enrichment & Experiential too similar & blend

Ask: Which is your primary or dominant mode, if any?

• Miller contends that all businesspeople have a predisposition or natural orientation to how they manifest their faith to work integration, influenced by church upbringing, theological teachings, societal and family conditioning, gender, geography, corporate culture, personal choice, work context, personality type, current church, etc.

Intro

God as Worker -- work as central

Work as good, fallen, restored?

• Remember the weekday, to keep it holy.

Limits of Work -- rhythms of life, play, rest -- keeping work in perspective

Revelation of the 7th day (Gen. 2:1-3)

• Even though the product of the first 6 days of creation was pronounced "good" or "very good," this 7th day is qualitatively different. The formula that rounded off each of the 6 days with the onset of evening & morning is noticeably absent.

• This is something new in the creation narrative--the repetition of "7th day" 3 times is deliberate. Days of work are not the only days that God has created. Work is part of a bigger whole.

• In these verses there are obvious echoes of the later sabbath command but the term "sabbath" is absent. There is no command, and no mention of humanity. But there seems to be this overarching, guiding rhythm which effects the whole of creation.

Ask: Why would God need to rest?

• Exhaustion? depletion? means of escape? model/set example?

Ask: Is rest part of work? the antithesis of work?

Suggest some examples which reveal how rest is built into the fabric of creation.

• Sleep; Birthing patterns in animals; Seasons of year; Plant growth; Caffeine usage!

The Fourth Commandment (Exod. 20:8-11)

• What are the Israelites supposed to do and why?

• Remember God => who modeled spiritual patterns/disciplines => the Sabbath became a sign of the cov't b/w God & Israel at Mt. Sinai (see Exod. 31:12-17). => Sense of worship--prepare beforehand.

• We have been told by God to rest. Look at how many words are given to this commandment.

• It's interesting that God records the importance of the sanctification of time even before the establishment of a holy place (no tent of meeting or tabernacle or temple yet).

• See also Exod. 31:12-17; Exod. 35:1-3; Ezek. 20:20; Jer. 17:22, 27; Neh. 13:22. People sanctify the Sabbath by observing it and they desecrate it by doing forbidden work on that day.

When the commandments/Law are reiterated in Deuteronomy (5:12-15), what reason is given for Sabbath observance?

• Observe as free persons. Their ancestors went 400 yrs in Egypt without a vacation or a day off. Reduced to slaves--those made in the image of God became reduced to work units. Hence, Israelites must cease all labor so that their servants can also participate in

the Sabbath-rest. Slaves cannot take a day off; free people can.   => Sense of enjoyment-
-social leisure, play, pleasure.

Jesus re-framed the understanding of Sabbath in His day, and in so doing He exerted His authority (Mark 2:23-3:6)

• The authority which Jesus claimed & exercised is also clearnly seen with respect to the Sabbath. The sacredness of the Sabbath had been established by God (Exod. 20). Only God could annul or alter this regulation, yet consider this text. Jesus clearly claimed the right to redefine the status of the Sabbath, a right which belongs only to someone virtually equal with God. It reveals Jesus self-consciousness: equal with the Father and possessing the right to do things which only God has the right to do.

• Responding to His Father's lead, He demonstrates that it's lawful to do good on the Sabbath--Jesus meets a real need and broadens the concept of "rest."

• Sabbath incidents like Mark 2:23-3:6 (≈ Matt. 12:14; ≈ Luke 6:1-11) got Jesus into trouble. Lord of Sabbath is high Christology (Mark 2:28). Coupled with His challenging of the purity laws (e.g., Matt. 15:1-20), cleansing of temple (John 2:13-22; Matt. 21:12-13 ≈ Mark 11:15-17 ≈ Luke 19:45-46), and claim to forgive sins (e.g., Luke 7:36-50). => Why He was called a blasphemer!

• Based on Jesus' life patterns and other teachings, He believed in work and rest.

After the resurrection, the early church (in Acts) seems to turn the "Lord's Day" (the first day of the week) into a distinctly Christianized version of the prior Jewish Sabbath.

• For some period of time the early Jewish Christians worshiped on the Jewish Sabbath, much like the temple and the synagogue were used as places of worship in the beginning. For Gentile Christians, Sabbath observance was never enforced; they were exempt, particularly from Jewish institutions.

• The need for a day of worship was felt--corporate worship, prayer, fellowship. . . (Heb. 10:25).

• As time passed, the emerging Christian church eventually adopted the 1st day of the week as its day of worship. There seems to be a progression in the New Testament that makes the day of rest and worship fall on the the 1st day as the testimony to the resurrection of Jesus. The "First Day" of the week was certainly the day Jesus rose from the dead (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1).

• Theologically, Jesus has worked (1st day) and because of His work, we begin with rest and then work out of it.

• This is a complex issue historically, but over the years, Sunday became Christians one-day-in-seven for both rest and worship. It's fascinating how the early church changed the day and shifted the focus in worship. This staggering shift must be accounted for historically.

• There are indications within the New Testament that the early church met consistently on the 1st day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1ff.; Rev.1:10). One's attitude toward the Sabbath remained, however, a matter of conscience in the teaching of Paul (cf. Rom. 14:5ff; Gal. 4:9ff.)

The Sabbath-rest in these "last days" and in the eschaton, mentioned in both Hebrews (4:4-5, 9-11) and Revelation (14:13; 21:1; 22:3-5), seems to be the culmination.

Discussion Questions: Talking Points

1. Why is this concept so difficult for many to implement?

• "Sleep is for sissies." -- even claim moral superiority; "I'll work harder" will solve everything; Fear of falling behind

1a. Or do you think that we as a culture are moving to a disproportionate need/demand for rest? leisure?

1b. If you do not observe the Sabbath, what are you essentially saying? Or, put differently, too much work can lead to . . .

2. Agree or Disagree: Is it hard to rest (well)? Why or why not?

• Must we work first in order to properly observe rest?

3. In what sense is rest/Sabbath "doing nothing"? wasting time? being unproductive? and how not?

• Is it a gift to humankind or a restriction?

3a. If rest doesn't necessarily equate with cessation from all activity, what seems to constitute rest (i.e., what are the core traits of restfulness or re-creation for you)?

• Each person must decide for himself, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, what conduct is appropriate for him/her on the Lord's Day. One should always be guided, however, by the realization that one's actions on this day, especially, is to epitomize his relationship to the Lord.

• Must decide about sleep, reading, walking, exercise, shopping, eating out, movies, watching TV, etc.

• Humanitatian; Community--visiting homebound, inviting lonely ones to our table.

• see Marva Dawn, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989).

• Keep Sunday special.

4. Would you say that God is in a hurry?

• Ever wonder why He doesn't work quicker? Can He have a purpose for making me slow down?

Conclusion

Some modern applications. . .

• Fri. to Sat. sundown; No wedding talk for engaged couple; No clock/watches; Church attendance?

• With changing circumstances, it's hard to decide once for all.

• Is there anything crucial about the 6:1 ratio? 24/7 or 24/6? => Princeton University schedules 6 weeks of academic madness followed by 1 week break--comparable?

Who benefits from the divinely-ordained pattern of work and rest?

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VITA

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